


3 1761 11631133 3







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2023 with funding from  
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761116311333>





CAZON  
X1  
-D23

Government  
Publication

66



No. 85

N° 85

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

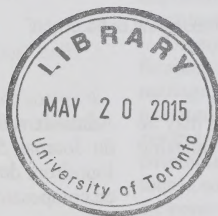
Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Thursday 14 May 2015**

**Jeudi 14 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller

### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario





# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 14 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 14 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please join me in a moment of silence for inner thought and personal reflection.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT  
(BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER  
L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO  
(MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 5, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sousa has moved second reading of Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, I'm sorry. A recorded vote being required, it will be deferred until after question period today.

*Second reading vote deferred.*

STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING  
GOVERNMENT ACT, 2015

LOI DE 2015 SUR LE RENFORCEMENT  
ET L'AMÉLIORATION  
DE LA GESTION PUBLIQUE

M<sup>me</sup> Meilleur moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 85, An Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts / Projet de loi 85,

Loi visant à renforcer et à améliorer la gestion publique en modifiant ou en abrogeant diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Madame Meilleur.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I rise in the House today to begin debate on the proposed Strengthening and Improving Government Act. Before I begin, I would like to let the members know that I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough Southwest.

Ce projet de loi contient plusieurs mesures importantes qui amélioreront l'efficacité du gouvernement. En fait, la Loi sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique met à jour 15 lois différentes. Par l'intermédiaire de ce projet de loi, nous envisageons d'apporter des réformes à de nombreux aspects du gouvernement; des réformes qui, dans bon nombre de cas, moderniseront nos programmes et processus, et faciliteront l'accès au systèmes.

I look forward to hearing from the members on this bill as we begin a discussion.

In one way or another, the proposed amendments will affect nearly every resident and business in this province. These changes will ultimately support our government's efforts to keep our economy moving and build Ontario up. Some of the amendments will solidify rights and freedoms of Ontarians and non-residents. Some will provide better support for families. For example, changes to the Courts of Justice Act would reflect the new non-resident divorce permitted under the federal Civil Marriage Act. This legislation applies to same-sex couples and others who were married in Ontario but whose own jurisdiction does not legally recognize their union, making divorce impossible where they now live. We want to make it clear that everyone is treated equally.

Un autre changement proposé devrait rendre la vie des familles avec enfants plus facile. Après la rupture d'un mariage, la question de la garde des enfants et des pensions alimentaires surgit souvent. Nous voulons nous assurer que les enfants dont les parents ne vivent plus ensemble sont entre de bonnes mains et qu'ils reçoivent tout le soutien dont ils ont besoin pour grandir heureux et en bonne santé. C'est pourquoi mon ministère travaille sur un plan qui permettra facilement aux parents de mettre en place et de changer en ligne des paiements de pensions alimentaires.

Proposed amendments to the Family Law Act will clarify that parents who use the online child support service, once it becomes operational, would have the same ongoing financial disclosure obligations as parents who are paying a child support order from a family court.

Receiving updated financial disclosure helps a parent who receives child support decide whether they should



apply to update their child support amount based on the other parent's income. This disclosure is integral to the child support payment process.

We are also looking out for those who watched over us when we were younger. As our parents age, we know how important it is to have trusted people surrounding them and quality services to care for them. Si vous avez un père ou une mère malade qui vit à domicile ou dans un établissement de soins de longue durée, vous savez à quel point le transport est problématique, surtout si votre père ou votre mère doit être transporté sur une civière.

Pour bon nombre d'entre nous, cela signifie utiliser un service de transport spécial avec civière et confier notre être cher à un fournisseur de services privé. Nous voulons nous assurer que les membres de notre famille sont en sécurité et bien soignés, et nous voulons avoir entièrement confiance dans les fournisseurs de services. C'est pourquoi nous proposons des modifications au Code de la route qui imposeraient des règlements rigoureux aux véhicules de transport avec civière et à leurs conducteurs. C'est une industrie qui n'a jamais été réglementée. Si les fournisseurs de services ne remplissent pas nos normes, ils risquent de perdre leur entreprise. C'est très simple.

We are also trying to make it easier to move people on a larger scale. Making investments in infrastructure not only grows the economy, but it puts in place services that people and communities rely on. The proposed amendment to the City of Toronto Act would adjust provisions regarding Toronto Transit Commission operation in nearby municipalities. The TTC and the regional municipality of York have reached an agreement in this regard, and these changes will help make it easier to operate the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension.

Looking even further down the road, this will allow for more collaboration when it comes to delivering regional transit across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area. It will give the TTC flexibility to enter into similar agreements with other neighbouring municipalities for future projects. The Toronto-York Spadina subway extension would help both transit commuters and those in their cars. It's expected to add 36 million transit trips and eliminate 30 million car trips each year. It will help get the GTHA moving. These are just some of the proposed amendments outlined in this act.

0910

Même si certains de ces changements semblent relativement mineurs, ils sont conçus pour rendre la vie des Ontariens et Ontariennes plus facile. Ces modifications vont renforcer nos collectivités et stimuler la croissance de l'économie.

Pour satisfaire les besoins constamment changeants des Ontariens et des Ontariennes, le gouvernement doit avoir des services, des programmes et des politiques modernes et efficaces.

Je passe maintenant la parole à mon adjoint parlementaire qui parlera plus en détail de la Loi sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique.

I hope that all members will support the important changes in this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Scarborough Southwest.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to continue debate on the proposed Strengthening and Improving Government Act.

I would first like to thank the Attorney General, Madeline Meilleur, as well as the Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care; Government and Consumer Services; Labour; Education; Municipal Affairs and Housing; Training, Colleges and Universities; and Transportation. Thank you all for your help in putting together such a comprehensive bill. Without you, this wouldn't have been possible. It's a real demonstration of how every part of this government is working together to respond to the ever-evolving needs of families, businesses and entire communities.

Taken together, this discrete set of significant amendments to 15 Ontario laws will contribute to the government's plan to build Ontario up. With every step we take to modernize the processes and improve the efficiency of government, we are strengthening the foundation of this province.

As I noted a moment ago, the Strengthening and Improving Government Act includes amendments to 15 existing pieces of legislation. They are: the City of Toronto Act, the Highway Traffic Act, the Courts of Justice Act, the Family Law Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act, the Employment Standards Act, the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act, the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, and several others as well.

While some of these changes are as small as refreshing the wording of an existing statute, others have the potential to significantly impact the lives of Ontarians.

Earlier, the Attorney General spoke of our proposal to regulate non-emergency transportation services. We entrust the transportation of our loved ones to these unregulated companies and to these drivers. That's why it's so important that we take steps to make sure our family members are treated professionally and are kept safe.

But this is not the only thing we're looking to improve in the Highway Traffic Act. Other proposed changes aim to make paperwork easier for drivers. This would give the transportation ministry options when serving a notice of intention to cancel a vehicle permit or driver's licence. In addition to traditional letter mail, for example, such notices could be delivered at a ServiceOntario counter. This could help ensure that drivers receive their notice before any licence cancellation takes place. They will also be given the opportunity and the appropriate amount of time to respond to any requirements, if need be.

Proposed changes to the Highway Traffic Act will also allow for electronic correspondence relating to commercial vehicle operators' registration. This includes accepting applications, renewals and client updates. It allows the Ministry of Transportation to issue notices, commercial vehicle operator certificates and account updates electronically.



It is all part of how we are planning to modernize government processes. Doing so allows us to evolve and look to the future, all while helping residents by making services more convenient.

You can also see modernization through our amendment to the Provincial Offences Act that allows for certain records to be created and transferred electronically. This change would create a legal authority for provincial offences courts to maintain an end-to-end electronic court record, from the filing of a charge to the disposition of a case.

This would also put in place a framework that would allow municipalities that are equipped to implement new technologies to do so. In municipalities where these new electronic records are adopted, court users would have the opportunity to choose a format to receive documents that is easier for them, such as email. It could also lead to reduced postage costs for the local courthouse.

We have also committed to propose several changes set out in the 2012 Physician Services Agreement with the OMA as part of our promise to provide better health care for all Ontarians—and hopefully prevent sneezing from happening during my debate.

If this bill is passed, the Commitment to the Future of Medicare Act will provide immunity for OMA directors and staff but not the association itself. The point of this proposed provision is to limit legal action against representatives for acts done in good faith during negotiations with the government related to physician agreements and payments, for example, agreements that contain fee changes for certain physician groups.

We need to make these updates surrounding agreements made with those who provide health care for all Ontarians. It speaks to our values that health and safety are of paramount importance for everyone in this province.

This is why we must ensure that the safety of people in the workforce continues to evolve and is made stronger. The amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act would incorporate new standards that could improve worker health and safety, as employers and workers will have access to a wider range of information about hazardous workplace chemicals. These changes are part of a broader national initiative to adopt international standards for classifying hazardous workplace chemicals and providing information on labels and safety data sheets. To adopt the new standards requires changes to federal and provincial or territorial regulations.

Amendments to federal hazardous products legislation and regulations came into force this past February. All provincial and territorial governments are in the process of amending their occupational health and safety legislation and regulations to reflect the federal changes. Now it's our turn. The information will be presented in a standardized format which will be easier to understand than the labels and safety data sheets currently in place. We're looking at all aspects of Ontarians' lives, Mr. Speaker, as you can see from the examples I've set out for you and the members so far. Many changes will be coming.

Consider the amendments to the Vital Statistics Act. They would allow the stock that is used for certificates and certified copies of registrations, which have the signature of the Registrar General and/or the Deputy Registrar General reproduced, to continue to be used when those individuals leave office. This would be the case for documents such as long form birth certificates. Currently, certificates have the signatures of both the Registrar General and Deputy Registrar General, and certified copies of registrations have the signature of the Deputy Registrar General. When these individuals no longer hold office, certificate stock and stock for certified copies of registrations that have reproductions of their signatures can no longer be used. Because of this, the Vital Statistics Act amendment would reduce waste and save costs. This amendment would also align Ontario's practices with those of most jurisdictions in Canada.

I realize this is a lengthy list of amendments; there are even more listed in this bill, beyond those discussed by myself and the Attorney General this morning. We want to improve the efficiency and responsiveness of government for the people of Ontario. They are, and always will be, top of mind, which is why I encourage members to support this bill. It's for residents; it's for businesses; it's for all of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I was trying to listen intently, and I had a little trouble following the last part about people who weren't in office anymore, so hopefully in the remaining time for the government side of the House we can learn a little bit more about what that was about, or maybe I can get some more information from the member who was speaking.

I think we all recognize that we're here to serve the public, not just our own self-interests. We're not here just to clap for each other, although some days it certainly feels that way. I think we're here to have the best interests of the public in mind. If we want to safeguard health care and our medicare system, as the member was just saying; if we want to have a top education system in the world; if we want to take care of our seniors; if we want to take care of people with Alzheimer's and dementia—who were visiting us yesterday—and provide support for their caregivers, who are often family members who quit jobs to take care of residents—all these types of things that we're trying to help. I believe that all of us here have the same caring personalities. That's why we're here, and we want to serve the public.

**0920**

But we also have to understand that we have to watch the revenue coming in and the expenditures going out. Without adequate resources, we cannot hold on to medicare, we cannot help our seniors and we cannot have a top-rated education system in the world.

I'm just hopeful that we can stop the wasteful spending and start streamlining and using the computer systems that so many other governments are using to streamline agencies and to better serve the public, using less of



the valuable resources, so that those resources can go where they're meant to go, to serve the very people who voted us into office.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I must say that I've been here for almost eight years, and for the entire time that I've been here, I have been pushing this government to regulate the private "looks like ambulance" service that we have in Ontario. The Ombudsman has spoken. The Auditor General has spoken. This has to be regulated. It makes no sense. It puts patients at risk.

So I was pleased to see that, finally, we are doing something. But if all we are doing is changing a few things, so that the ambulances themselves are safer, and putting a little bit of responsibility on the drivers, I would say that I didn't wait for eight years to only get that. I'm not going to stand for this, Speaker.

Are those good steps? Yes, absolutely. Those ambulances—I think the Ombudsman said it best: They look and smell like an ambulance, but they may lose a wheel on their way to the call. It is not what we want in Ontario. Am I happy that we're going to be regulating the actual vehicles? Yes. I don't want the wheels falling off, and I don't want the patients falling out the back door, either.

But this is not enough. To have a vehicle that is safe and worthy to be on the road is one step. To make sure that the people in the back of the ambulance know how to look after your grandfather and grandmother and everybody else that the minister said rides in the back of that ambulance—this has not been addressed.

Sure, the wheels won't fall off of those pretend ambulances anymore; that's good. But New Democrats want way more than that. We want full regulations so that we have quality of care, not just quality of vehicles.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's a really wonderful opportunity for me to add my voice to the debate and discussion around Bill 85 this morning.

I want to pay tribute, of course, to the Attorney General and to our colleague the member from Scarborough Southwest, who serves as the Attorney General's parliamentary assistant.

There has been a lot of discussion already, particularly from both the minister and her parliamentary assistant, with respect to the wide variety of elements that are included in this legislation.

As the Minister of Transportation, there are two that stand out for me. I'm going to focus, for the remaining time that I have, on the importance of moving forward with the revisions, or the enhancements or improvements, to the City of Toronto Act, even though it doesn't technically fall, as legislation, within the purview of the Ministry of Transportation as a result of what's included here in Bill 85.

It will significantly help with respect to a major transit infrastructure project, the Toronto-York Spadina subway extension, which, as many will know in this House, is a

project that will extend, for the very first time, Toronto's subway system into a neighbouring municipality, into York region, coming up to the city of Vaughan and arriving, ultimately, in the Vaughan Corporate Centre, which is physically located in the riding of Thornhill, but it serves people from the riding of Thornhill, and people from my own riding and my own community of the rest of the city of Vaughan: Woodbridge residents, Maple residents, Kleinburg residents and many others beyond.

But beyond the fact that it comes to the city of Vaughan, it also will provide, for the first time, a subway connection to York University. Somewhere north of 50,000 students a day travel to that campus. By having that subway up and running and by making sure, through Bill 85 and through a number of the other leadership decisions that have been made by the government on this side of the House, the Liberal government, with respect to making sure that we invest in this kind of crucial transit infrastructure—it will significantly help those students, tens of thousands of them, to arrive at that campus. So it's wonderful to stand and support Bill 85 this morning.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm going to have an opportunity to speak on Bill 85, Strengthening and Improving Government Act, in a few minutes. I understand it is an omnibus bill, and there are some concerns I have on the section on the MTCU and the College of Trades that I just want to bring to the floor again. That has been a very controversial topic in this House, and I look forward to hearing the comments and feedback on that as well.

Mr. Speaker, some of the worries I have with these omnibus bills is that we sometimes think that, just because they cover a bunch of ministries, everything they're covering is going to be—any of the amendments might be perfect. I'm kind of disappointed that the government only took 10 minutes on the leadoff on something that's covering so many ministries. I would have thought there would be a lot more clarification from the government members on it. So I'll try to add a little bit more to my critic's portfolio and deal with some of the issues I see that possibly are not being addressed by some of the things that I think should have been addressed right here in the leadoff and in the general legislation.

I look forward to that opportunity, and I'll be able to speak in a couple of minutes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I return to the Attorney General. You have two minutes.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Merci, monsieur le Président. First of all, let me say thank you to the members from Thornhill, Nickel Belt, the Minister of Transportation and the member from Simcoe North for their comments.

Let me address, first of all, a question that the member from Thornhill had. It's very simple: Currently the certificate bears the signature of both the Registrar and the Deputy Registrar General, and certificated copies of registration bear the signature of the Deputy Registrar



General. When these individuals are not employees anymore—when they retire—we have this stack of certificates, and we have to throw them out. We cannot use them anymore.

This will permit the ministry to continue to use these certificates. We're just doing what other provinces are doing. It will reduce waste and save costs. That's what it is. It's very simple.

I just want to talk also about the comment by the member from Nickel Belt. Of course, it's so important to have these individuals who provide non-emergency stretcher transportation services to have good training and that their vehicles are in good operation because—you're right—they do give service to our loved ones, most of the time our seniors. We want to make sure they are regulated and that our moms and dads receive services that are safe and secure.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I want to share the leadoff with at least, I know, the member from Caledon and the member from Kitchener–Waterloo—did I get that right? Kitchener–Conestoga. I get all the ridings mixed up, Mr. Speaker; I'm so sorry.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You're like me.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I have a real problem. I know Simcoe North, and I know Jim's is Simcoe–Grey.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm not sure what yours is. It's in the GTA; I know that.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Garfield, we have something in common.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Yes. Okay.

Again, I applaud the Attorney General for bringing forward Bill 85, an Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts.

Just a note to the Attorney General, first of all, a compliment: Thank you for coming to Simcoe North tomorrow for the announcement of the 400th anniversary of Champlain. The town of Penetanguishene and the area of Huronia have put a tremendous amount of effort into organizing a fantastic event this year on the 400th anniversary of Champlain coming to what is now Ontario. The reality is, we're going to have celebrations on the August 1 weekend, so I want everybody who is possibly interested in celebrating Champlain to come that weekend to Simcoe county and to the town of Penetanguishene.

0930

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Talk about that beautiful park there.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Yes, okay; I'm going to give the minister another compliment here.

We're going to also be building a beautiful park. It's Penetanguishene Rotary Park, and it's on the water. There will be re-enactments and there will be statues. It's really going to be a legacy project for the next 100 years at least.

For the 300th anniversary of when Champlain came here, they had it in 1921. The war was taking place dur-

ing the 300th anniversary. The town of Penetang did a phenomenal job in 1921.

We're very, very proud of what is taking place. The county, the province of Ontario, the federal government and the town of Penetanguishene have all become strong partners in this project. I'm very proud of it, and I know the minister is very proud of it as well.

That takes us back to Bill 85. It's such a long bill. I hope that everybody is going to explain all these sections from the government's point of view even more, because the leadoff wasn't very long. Probably the minister's statement was as long as the leadoff. Anyhow, we're looking forward to it. We're looking forward to seeing some of these things taking place and some of these corrections being made by this legislation.

As the critic for education and training, colleges and universities, I wanted to speak a little bit about one section: schedule 6, the Ontario College of Trades and Apprenticeship Act. It gives the college registrar the authority to appoint an investigator to investigate the conduct of a member and provides that for the purpose of such an investigation, the investigator has all the powers of a commission under part II of the Public Inquiries Act. This latter act was repealed and replaced by the Public Inquiries Act, 2009. The proposed amendment would replace the reference to the Public Inquiries Act with a reference to the Public Inquiries Act, 2009. The amendment is required to ensure that the statutory cross-references of the act are accurate.

In June 2006, an amendment to the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act provided that each college, rather than its board of governors, was a corporation without share capital. The amendment would provide certainty with respect to the continuity of the ownership of college assets and obligations acquired or incurred before and after June 2006.

The act would be amended to provide certainty with respect to the ownership of assets and obligations, allowing colleges to respond easily to questions about the continuity of ownership, given prior changes in legislation relating to college boards. The second part of that is fairly clear, and I agree with it.

I want to talk, Mr. Speaker, for a minute about the Ontario College of Trades. We fought hard against that. There were two or three ministers, during that period, who we dealt with. Although we're trying to make amendments to this investigator and add this investigator's title to the job, I'm still concerned that this is becoming a bureaucracy that is really not needed in the province of Ontario. I think they have six floors in a building downtown on Bay Street.

We brought the legislation in on the Ontario College of Trades act, and what I would suggest to you is that there was very, very little consultation done with the people who hold a certificate of qualification in the trades in Ontario. Those trades basically apply to 22 compulsory trades—and other people have a certificate of qualification in trades that are non-compulsory but they've taken the full apprenticeship; for example, there are many

people who work as carpenters but they don't have the C of Q.

The problem was that when we brought in the College of Trades act—there are actually 157 trades in Ontario—there was very little notification, even up to the point where people were getting their invoices in the mail. They didn't realize what was actually happening at that particular ministry. So the people that had a certificate of qualification in these trades—the trade of electrician, for example—every three years would pay a total of \$60 to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and the cheque was sent to the Ministry of Finance. They would pay that \$60 for a three-year certification. A sticker would come in the mail, they would put it on their certificate-of-qualification licence, and that would entitle them to practise in that trade for the next three years.

What's happened is, the fees went up substantially; they went up about 676%. They are now \$130 a year plus the HST. That is per year. So it used to be \$20 a year. It's now \$138.50, or something like that, the exact amount of money.

On top of that, why I'm concerned is that, first of all, a lot of people didn't even send their licences in; they didn't send the cheque in—they didn't get it in the mail or whatever. So there's still a lot of turmoil right in that particular area. But on top of that, now they've got the bookkeeping to worry about every year. So for somebody who has been in the trades for the last 20 years and who has been used to doing it every three years, now what's happening? They have to do it every year. Already, people have forgotten about having to make sure their licence is renewed. Once you lose it, we don't know what the long-term impact will be in actually getting that licence back.

The whole consultation that took place around the Ontario College of Trades, I thought, was not done in a very professional manner, and, as a result of that, tradespeople today in Ontario are quite bitter that they had to join this and they've paid these fees that are substantially higher.

The government recognized that, and we certainly mentioned that leading up to the election last June, on June 12. During the election, Premier Wynne announced—they were up in Thunder Bay, and I remember her quote. She said that, based on the success of its first year—the College of Trades—we were going to have a review of it. If you were going to have a review of it, I don't think it was very successful. That's what we asked for. So Tony Dean is actually doing a review of the Ontario College of Trades right today.

The problem is, again, we haven't gone back to the tradespeople. The government has the database to send out the invoices for the renewal of their membership in the College of Trades each and every year. But what I suggest—and I've got it on the order paper as a question—is that a letter, a survey, should also be sent out to all the tradespeople in Ontario; that's all of the people who have a C of Q. They should be able to have a survey on what their feelings were on the College of Trades. It shouldn't be a former bureaucrat here at Queen's Park

saying, "This is what's right and this is what's wrong"; it should be the tradespeople themselves having a say in whether they believe the College of Trades should even be in existence, or where the College of Trades could be a benefit, or what are the negative things. They have not been informed on this at all. So that's every tradesperson who walks to work with their tool box or their lunch box and they're working on these job sites day in and day out; they have no say whatsoever in the review. I think that's wrong.

I know we're making an amendment to the investigator and enforcement section, because the College of Trades has, I believe, 79 vehicles out there now, and they've got enforcement people running around making sure people have their licences and all that kind of thing. But when we're doing a review of something so important, that impacts all the tradespeople in the province of Ontario, I think it's a duty and a responsibility, as part of that review, that every tradesperson should be given a proper survey asking a series of questions, and one of the questions would be, "Should the College of Trades even exist?"

I, for example, am a strong supporter of the community college system in Ontario. As the critic, I've been at, I believe, about 15 of them now. I've actually visited them, right from one end of the province to the other. I've still got to do the ones in northern Ontario and in the Sault Ste. Marie area and Timmins. But the reality is that these community colleges are doing a fantastic job.

#### 0940

I think that the community college system could actually be responsible for all the trades in Ontario, and we wouldn't need to have an Ontario College of Trades. We wouldn't need to have this awkward apprenticeship system we've got today. I think there's a way we can improve the community college system and let them actually be the leaders in it.

If you're applying today to be a doctor, you don't apply to a college of trades. You don't have to work through a group like that. You apply to a university. The proper university will get you into a medical school, if you've got the proper marks, and you go through the system that way.

I think the same thing should apply to the community college system with trades. If you want to be a tradesperson, you go and you enrol in the community college that has the best program—say, for example, if it's electricity and you want to go to Humber College, or if it's welding and you want to go to Seneca, something like that. These community colleges have all of that information available. They have the framework and the infrastructure in place to actually enhance and improve the apprenticeship and training programs right here in Ontario.

I want to just zero in on that for a second. The community college systems will be 50 years old in 2017, I believe it is. I hope a lot of them will be celebrating their phenomenal accomplishments. Every community college I go to has some kind of expertise in certain areas. It's



mind-boggling. They actually don't get a chance to brag province-wide about the types of things that they do in our community colleges.

My friend from Kitchener here, my colleague, he'll tell you all about the things that are happening at Conestoga. It's just mind-boggling. People in London will tell you what's happening at Fanshawe. There are just some amazing programs taking place—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Or Niagara College.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Niagara College, with their partnerships with the grape and wine industry. These are amazing things to see.

Mr. Speaker, if an MPP hasn't been to their own community college in their own area, I would suggest that they make sure they get tours, they get to meet the presidents and the boards of directors. Not only that, maybe go to other areas as well and see some of the expertise that's provided in the other community colleges in other areas. They are really, really remarkable.

I personally work with the community college—mostly, the one I work with is Georgian College, which has seven locations in the county of Simcoe and up into Muskoka and Grey-Bruce. They have unbelievable campuses, leading up to all kinds of expertise in all different fields. I believe the graduation rate at Georgian now—92% of the people will have job within six months of graduation. That's pretty successful.

When I say that the community college system should be responsible for the full apprenticeship program, I mean that sincerely. They should be the people who are taking the lead on what trades become compulsorily certified and what trades remain with the current C of Qs.

Of course, the other thing that they can be zeroing in on is the number of students they allow into the system. We're a supporter of the 1-to-1 ratio, in our caucus. The government and the College of Trades, of course, are not in favour of that. That's a whole complex issue in itself, and I'm not going to zero in on all that today.

The reality is that the community college system in Ontario is capable of doing much of the work, or most of the work, that the Ontario College of Trades is set up to do. It appears now to be no more than a duplication.

Tradespeople with the College of Trades have kind of given up. They say, "Okay, we've just got to pay more. It's another bunch of money." They're not really overly impressed with the enforcement division of it. For example, people can be tradespersons and they can be running a legitimate company, and they have to follow all the rules of the Ministry of Labour—the number of apprentices, the ratio system in the apprenticeship system. They might be paying their taxes and paying the full amount of money, and everything they have to do to survive in business.

What happens is, they could be in an area—say, for example, a cottage area—where new cottages are being built. People will come up on a weekend with a load of electrical wire, they'll wire up a cottage or something, and they won't get any inspections done on it. They buy their wire at Home Depot or Canadian Tire or something,

so they're doing the job cheaper, and they're doing it without any inspections. That's work that the local contractor didn't get that he was actually qualified to do.

Yet the College of Trades enforcement division will go after the local contractor over whether he's got the right number of apprentices or not, and these guys—we call them "fly-by-nights," guys who work out of their trunks—get away scot-free. You can complain to the College of Trades, and no will go after that guy. No one is going to go into a cottage road on a Saturday afternoon in the summer to see if some guy's doing a job illegally. They'll go after the guy—9 to 5, Monday to Thursday—and make sure that he hasn't got a labourer or a 17-year-old kid out of high school working on a construction site who's not an actual apprentice.

These are the things that are not being addressed at the College of Trades. We can fix up these bills, like Bill 85, which makes a minor amendment to the College of Trades act. What I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is the College of Trades isn't working. It's simply not working here in Ontario. It's very, very disappointing that we bring this up over and over again.

There was a chance to fix some of these things; that was with the review that Mr. Dean's doing. I'm really disappointed that a letter couldn't go out, a survey couldn't have gone out, to all these people to say, "What is your opinion on this? Have you got ideas to improve the College of Trades? What would you like to see done with it?" Instead, they're just completely ignored.

There will be changes made to the College of Trades, and the people who will suffer as a result of those changes are the people who are paying the bills now. That's how the College of Trades functions. It functions on the membership fees, and they're not getting an opportunity as a result of that to be addressed in a professional manner. Actually, I would say tradespeople are being treated as second-class citizens as a result of this survey.

I know I'm taking way more time than I should have—

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** No, no, keep going.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Well, I don't have a lot more to say. How much longer can I go? I need a drink of water.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** It's okay. It's okay.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm doing this on the fly, Liz, you know.

Anyhow, thank you very much. That was my chance to say a few words on the college. I want to pass it on now to the member from Kitchener, who will continue on.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I appreciated listening to my colleague's remarks; he talks a lot about a lot of things. I'm not going to get up to his riding this weekend, but I wish him and all the folks in his riding a happy anniversary.



Speaker, it's a great opportunity to join the debate on Bill 85, the Strengthening and Improving Government Act, 2015, a wide-ranging act amending 15 pieces of legislation, including the Highway Traffic Act.

I'd like to kick off my comments by noting my clear support for both strengthening and improving government. Clearly, there's no end to the long list of areas where this government could improve. Just look at the latest budget: It reads like a what-not-to-do guide to government.

There's so much room for improving government, as the title of the act suggests, it's hard to know where to begin. Whether it be shell games with our assets to disguise a long-entrenched Liberal government spending addiction, taking money from health care to pay the interest on the debt or picking winners and losers for transit funding, the Ontario budget's direction to build Ontario up points us toward continued economic and labour turmoil that threatens to tear Ontario down.

There are so many areas for improvement, Speaker. As Bill 85 does address the Highway Traffic Act to improve transportation in Ontario, I do want to highlight the many concerns for improved transportation and transit infrastructure that the bill leaves untouched. As I noted earlier, this government's budget announcement and its series of high-profile transit announcements in the preceding weeks saw the Wynne Liberals continue their practice of picking winners and losers, where winners receive funding for LRT or regional express rail while others are left wondering if the Wynne Liberal government will ever deliver on promises in their area.

0950

Take the \$1.6 billion for funding of the Hurontario LRT, while folks in Hamilton, who were also promised full funding, continue to wait at the end of the table for whatever scraps the government may have left to throw them. Meanwhile, we have the regional government in Waterloo, where I'm from, which was originally promised two-thirds funding for their LRT by the provincial Liberals—funding which was subsequently dropped to only a third, leaving municipal taxpayers on the hook that those in Mississauga and Brampton somehow evaded. That's a true story, Speaker.

Where's the fairness? Where's the consistency? I submit that if we're looking for ways to improve government, we may want to start by ensuring we're not just making our transit plans up as we go along. It's the same situation with regional express rail, the key component for delivery of the all-day, two-way GO promise this government has made to residents in my area of Kitchener-Waterloo and to many throughout the province.

Yes, the minister and the Premier did go to great lengths to get in front of cameras and strike up the band to cheer on regional express rail to Barrie, yet after months of promising all-day, two-way service for the people of Kitchener-Waterloo, expansions on the Kitchener line sadly weren't even mentioned.

While the Premier had indicated expanded GO train service would happen "immediately" prior to the elec-

tion, and the former minister said it could actually happen within five years, the onslaught of new transit announcements contain no mention of when the promised two-way, all-day service the people of Barrie are now welcoming will ever make its way to the region of Waterloo.

Commuters in Waterloo region have been given the impression again and again that two-way, all-day GO service, with frequent trains going east—that's important—and westbound—even more important—all day long, was just around the corner: Buy your ticket now. Now, I don't even think it's clear what this government is committed to.

To add insult to injury, after announcing the Wynne Liberal government plan for selling off Hydro One to supposedly pay for transit priorities, the budget is now telling municipalities who have yet to be allocated provincial funding for their rail extension projects to sell off their assets of their—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. Point of order, the Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I know this very important legislation is very broad, but I'm pretty sure the member from Kitchener—Conestoga is not within a million miles of speaking to the elements of this particular legislation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for your point of order. I'm listening very carefully and I was getting close to that.

Continue, the member for Kitchener—Conestoga.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** A million miles? I mean, jeez, that's what we'll have to drive around this province instead of taking that GO train from Kitchener-Waterloo.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** What about the bullet?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Yes, or the bullet train from Windsor to Toronto.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I'd ask you to tie it to the current bill as quickly as possible.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Obviously, this bill touches on the Highway Traffic Act. I think it's appropriate that we speak to that, and I think it's important. When you talk about the Strengthening and Improving Government Act, that's a pretty broad title. I can loop a lot back in simply by referencing the title.

If we want to talk about improving government, strengthening Ontario, we have to talk about the investments they've made and the ones that they haven't, but promised to. I think it's absolutely appropriate to talk about the promised all-day, two-way GO service for Waterloo region—only to find now that they want us to sell off our assets. That was actually mentioned in the budget.

Look, we could be here all day. I've only got so much time left, because I am sharing with the member from Dufferin—Caledon. That said, when it comes to Bill 85's parameters regarding improvements to the Highway Traffic Act, I feel it's a bit like, in the words of Yogi Berra, "déjà vu all over again." That's because it was only a few short weeks ago that I was debating a bill in

this House attempting to amend the Highway Traffic Act to include penalties for drug-impaired driving as part of the government's Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act. Those penalties proposed by this government, however, never even actually saw the light of day for third reading. That's because government members at committee on day 1 of clause-by-clause had, in a bizarre turn of events, voted out a pertinent section of their own bill that had impacted the sections penalizing drug-impaired driving.

So here we go again, Speaker. When it comes to Bill 31, and now Bill 85's direction with regard to drug-impaired driving, I will repeat what I said a number of weeks ago. We all agree that those impaired, whether from alcohol or drugs, should not be driving, period. We all agree on that. The fact is that Ontario is one of only three jurisdictions in Canada that currently has no sanctions for drug-impaired driving. So the issue finally being addressed again here allows Ontario motorists to have the protection that the other provinces already benefit from. We already have laws to deal with the impacts of drunk driving, so this bill proposes to fill the void in Ontario to take on the impact of drugged driving.

Specifically, the bill will allow for someone's driver's licence to be suspended for three, seven, 30 or 90 days if a driver fails a roadside test and the police officer, trained in standardized field sobriety testing or as a drug recognition expert, reasonably believes that their ability to drive is impaired, depending on the level of impairment.

We've now moved eight years down the road since federal law changes were made to give police new powers to compel suspected drug-impaired drivers to take roadside sobriety tests. While there are a number of technologies out there for testing, whether through a type of breathalyzer or saliva testing, many questions remain with regard to both civil liberties and the actual science behind the procedures.

Question one surrounds the fact that, unlike the 0.08% threshold for blood alcohol concentration, there's no scientific consensus about how much consumption of certain drugs will cause impairment. Some hold that five nanograms per millilitre of blood should be the limit for cannabis, while others have said it should be 10. Yet even as the debate continues, the fact remains that it's the responsibility of us as legislators to address issues surrounding drug-impaired driving because of the harms it may cause.

While we know that many of the problems associated with drug-impaired driving are similar to those associated with drunk driving, there is substantial evidence suggesting that the prevalence of drug-impaired driving may be higher than that of alcohol-impaired driving. And while we're not just talking about marijuana use, there are studies pointing to the fact that driving under the influence of marijuana alone may be more common than drunk driving. That's a significant concern. According to the Partnership For a Drug-Free Canada, "Cannabis significantly affects the skills necessary for driving. Cannabis causes euphoria, slowed thinking, confusion, impaired memory

and learning, increased heart rate and anxiety. These effects are felt within minutes, peak after about half an hour and can last up to two hours." They go on to report that "driving while on cannabis demonstrates slowed thinking, which delays reaction time to important events occurring on the road. It also distorts time and distance perception, making it difficult for the driver to navigate turns into oncoming traffic. Concentration and attention span are also decreased, increasing the likelihood that the driver will be distracted from watching the road. The crash rate of cannabis users can be anywhere from two to six times higher than sober drivers, depending on the duration and quantity of the drug.

"Considerable evidence from both real and simulated driving studies indicates that marijuana can negatively affect a driver's attentiveness, perception of time and speed, and the ability to draw on information obtained from past experiences."

The studies continue. I think I saw an ad on the subway the other day calling for volunteer pot smokers between the ages of 17 and 24 who own a driver's licence to come forward for another study examining the impacts here in the city of Toronto. One of the latest studies from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health estimates that "4% to 12% of motor vehicle deaths or injuries occurred under the influence of cannabis. Based on motor vehicle accident statistics from 2010, this suggests that there were 89 to 267 fatalities, and 6,625 to 20,475 injuries in Canada that year related to cannabis use." This is a cause for concern.

#### 1000

Beyond marijuana, the drug-impaired driving problem extends much further, to include the use of a wide variety of both legal and illegal drugs, running the gamut from stimulants, depressants, antidepressants, narcotics, hallucinogens and sleeping pills, among other intoxicating substances. So there is little doubt that we need to get a handle on how to address the dire impacts that can result due to any and all types of impaired driving, and yet even as we support the direction toward dealing with the occurrence of drug-impaired driving, we recognize that there will be concerns moving forward.

I remain concerned that with government yet to introduce any reliable scientific testing for drug impairment, the imposition of penalties is left open to question and possible legal challenge. The fact remains that while government has spoken about examining testing procedures in other jurisdictions until some verifiable type of roadside breathalyzer for drugs is proven valid and accurate, we will require further detail, if the legislation moves on to committee, as to how and when a driver is determined to be drug-impaired for the purposes of this legislation.

I know I've only got a few minutes left.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I could go on. I know the member opposite would appreciate that, but I want to note that Bill 85 also calls for regulation of private sector non-emergency stretcher transportation vehicles and their



drivers, ensuring that they meet specific requirements with respect to vehicle inspection and maintenance, prescribed qualifications for staff, equipment and record-keeping. That's contained in this bill. There is no doubt that the safety of our medical transportation services is important, but given the Liberal government's track record in areas of overseeing medical transportation in the past, we do remain skeptical of government's ability to regulate those services.

I want to remind folks, as it pertains to this bill, that it was just less than a year ago that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts issued a comprehensive, scathing report after a two-year investigation into the Ornge air ambulance scandal. It's not entirely surprising that many in this House today are unaware of the report—I encourage them to pick up a copy and over the long weekend, if they've not already read it, to please do so—because just as it was about to be released publicly, the Premier called an election, successfully burying what she knew would be a highly critical report. Much as the McGuinty pro-rogation saw government attempt to avoid scrutiny for the \$1-billion gas plant scandal, the Wynne government headed straight for the exits when they realized the Ornge was about to hit the fan. When the going gets tough, the regime gets going right out the door, where they don't have to answer our questions.

That said, and even as an ongoing criminal investigation into the Ornge scandal by OPP continues, I thought it's important to note some of the significant highlights of this report—two years in the making—as it pertains to the section in the bill relating to patient transfers etc. The report contained 95 specific concerns that relate directly to decisions made at the most senior levels in the Ministry of Health, concerns that include—and I believe the government should hear these, as we speak to these changes made in this bill pertaining to this section. They highlighted in the report:

- the failure of the minister to respond to the repeated warnings about Ornge mismanagement, and health and safety risks;

- an oversight branch for the air ambulance service whose director and staff have no experience in either air or land ambulance;

- deputy ministers ignoring the advice of senior civil servants against proceeding with the Chris Mazza scheme at the very outset;

- instructing the head of the emergency services branch to stand down and take direction from Chris Mazza; and

- the ministry's failure to exercise even the most basic of oversight responsibilities.

Further, the report exposes Ornge board members for their failure to exercise their fiduciary responsibilities and calls for the government to pursue them—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. On a point of order, the Attorney General.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'm trying to understand the remarks from the member of the PC Party, and I cannot relate them to anything in the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for your point of order.

I would ask the member to tie his comments to the bill as soon as possible.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** If the member gives me a few more minutes, I think by the end of what I'm about to say—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Michael Harris:** If she listens attentively, she will actually understand how I am including these important remarks about the public accounts committee back to Bill 85, because there is, in fact, a regulation—and she's the minister for the bill and will know this—of private sector non-emergency stretcher transportation vehicles and their drivers, ensuring that they meet specific requirements. That's exactly how I'm tying this to that, so I encourage her to wait until I'm done and then render a decision, perhaps, on that.

The report—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I don't think it's a decision of the Attorney General. It's a decision of the Speaker. I'm listening very carefully, and I'm actually reading the act, but I'm having trouble also.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Okay. Well, I've got three pages left, and we'll figure it out.

Dr. Mazza collected \$9.3 million over six years at Ornge, as he created a complex web of for-profit and not-for-profit entities related to the air ambulance service, all under the nose of the Liberal government and then-Health Minister Deb Matthews.

I think we owe the committee—and specifically the former member for Newmarket-Aurora, Mr. Frank Klees—our gratitude for spearheading this investigation and providing a significant report, which we would all benefit from reading and which I encourage members opposite to do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would give the member one more warning, and then I'll move to the next speaker. I would like you to speak to the bill—as it relates to ambulance, what's in the bill.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** We owe it to front-line first responders—the pilots, the paramedics—and the dispatchers and administrators of Ornge to make this report public.

Again, Speaker, while oversight of our medical transportation vehicles, as called for in Bill 85, is probably a good idea, given the history with this current government at the wheel, I do have some misgivings. I think that's fair.

I know my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon wants to chime in on this, so I'd like to thank members for the opportunity to speak today, and, obviously, thank the member for Simcoe North for his thoughts on this wide-ranging proposed legislation.

Speaker, with that, I'll turn it over to my colleague from Dufferin-Caledon.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It is a pleasure to rise this morning to speak about the Strengthening and Improving Government Act—I think that's the latest propaganda title—an

Act to strengthen and improve government by amending or repealing various Acts. As you know, this is actually a reintroduction of a government bill from the previous Parliament that died on the order paper.

But I specifically want to—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order, please.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Thanks, Speaker.

I specifically want to add on to what my colleague from Kitchener—Conestoga was referencing, and that was the ambulance non-medical, non-emergency transfers that are under schedule 7, Ministry of Transportation.

In my community, there is a lot of what you call a non-emergency transfer that occurs. It's becoming a real issue, because there do not seem to be any standards in place that ensure that the fee or charge is appropriate or consistent.

I actually have very disturbing examples from an emergency room nurse who has told me directly that people are now making decisions that say, "Don't send my mom or dad"—who is in a long-term-care home—"to the hospital, because I don't want to pay—or I cannot afford to pay—the fee of the non-emergency transfer" that occurs when they leave the emergency room and go back to the long-term-care home.

I have very, very serious concerns with the fact that we need to take a much closer look at that industry and ensure not only that the staff who are manning these vehicles are appropriately trained, but that there is some comfort and consistency in how the costs are decided upon.

If people are actually making a decision that they do not want their loved one to go to the emergency room because they can't afford the return trip in that non-medical transfer vehicle, because they don't have a vehicle that would be appropriate for a wheelchair or the particular circumstances, I think we have a bigger issue than what is specifically referenced in schedule 7 with the amendments that are being proposed here with Bill 85.

1010

Sometimes we learn about these issues just because we get the calls from the constituency. It had not occurred to me that there would be an inconsistency in the rules—well, let's be honest; there are no rules. There don't seem to be any rules as to what cost is appropriate. I would like to see more of that studied, whether it's through the Ministry of Health, or if we want to do it with schedule 7 through the Ministry of Transportation, I don't really care. What I do care about is, I don't want to be in a position where people are saying no to going to the hospital for specific services that they need; perhaps it's a physiotherapy session, and they are concerned that they will not be able to afford the charge that happens at the end of the program.

I would urge the government to look at that and come up with a solution where there is an appropriate and easily understood, transparent view for people to see

what is covered under the non-emergency transfers and what is the appropriate cost for it. Perhaps it's a situation where you need to have a maximum fee. We often talk about the very important value we have in our universal health care. Not everything is free, and if the seniors and people on a fixed income in Dufferin—Caledon are being unfairly or unreasonably charged, I think that we as legislators have a responsibility to move forward and try to fix that problem.

Back to Bill 85: It is an omnibus bill that affects 15 different pieces of legislation across eight different ministries. Some are very basic housekeeping issues. Some are—how shall I say this nicely?—repairing or fixing errors that occurred in previous legislation, and some very current actually. Some of the Ministry of Transportation amendments are in Bill 85 now because there was basically a mess-up at committee, and things got removed that should not have been removed. So we have Bill 85 trying to correct that error.

It is a housekeeping bill, but it does very little to strengthen and improve government within our province and certainly anything related to the fiscal—I'm concerned because the Speaker keeps looking at me like I should sit down. I'll keep going until you tell me to stop.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** No, you have lots of time left.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'd like to spend some time discussing the impacts of Bill 85, specifically as it relates to my responsibility as critic for the Ministry of the Attorney General. Bill 85 amends the Courts of Justice Act to match with federal legislation—the Civil Marriage Act and the Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act—and to the list of statutes which the Family Court and Family Rules Committee have jurisdiction over. Basically this will allow clarity on court proceedings for non-residents, same-sex spouses and First Nation matrimonial property laws. This is basically an update to allow people who do not live in Ontario but were married in Ontario in a same-sex relationship to divorce and separate their assets. In addition, it will allow future federal family legislation to be added to the Family Court and Family Rules Committee's jurisdiction by regulation.

I'll give my regulation rant for a moment. Historically and consistently, I have a lot of concerns with how much of the legislation that we see before us is left to what we call "by regulation." As many members of this chamber know, but I'm not sure the public understands, regulatory changes are something that are not debated or discussed in this chamber. As little as three members of the cabinet—not even the full cabinet—have to look at every single regulation. They can be signed by three cabinet ministers and within days have regulatory changes that have very serious impacts to the people of Ontario. As a general rule, I'm not a big fan of regulations—and I will let the Speaker speak.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you very much.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*



**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Please help me welcome to the House the parents of page Megan Chan: Rebecca Yu and Johnny Chan. They're here to see their daughter Megan in action today.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm pleased to introduce the mother and father of page Joshua Osborne. Jennifer Osborne and Dr. Raymond Osborne are with us today.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like Queen's Park to give a warm welcome to Special Olympics coach Teresa Demytruk, and a special events coordinator with the Special Olympics, Mr. James Montague, both here from Oakville.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I'd like to introduce Dietmar Arff, the father of page captain Ryan Arff. He will be in the public gallery this morning—if you are, just give me the wave; if not, wave when you get here.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm delighted to welcome Rebecca Horeth, who's in the gallery today. She's from Althouse College, the teachers' college at Western University. Rebecca has been spending two weeks at the Ministry of Education, gaining a better understanding of education policy development. Welcome, Rebecca.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm pleased to welcome Fred Hahn, president of CUPE Ontario, who's joined by Chris Watson, also from CUPE. Welcome.

**Mrs. Amrit Mangat:** I'm pleased to welcome page Thomas Atkinson's mother, Cindy Atkinson. Welcome to Queen's Park. She will be in the public gallery.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** He is making his way in: Kent MacNeill from Sudbury. He's with OECTA and is participating in the rally today.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I just want to reintroduce my nephew Aaron Natyshak, who has been here with me all week, sort of job shadowing. This is his last day here. I had a great time having him here. He learned a lot through his experience, so thank you to all members.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** We have five personal support workers here in the gallery today: Theresa Thomas, Ghiti Irvani, Theresa Matteer, Penney Murphy and Hazel John. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I also want to take this opportunity to recognize PSW Day on May 19, next week.

## LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm always willing to admit my mistakes. Last round, I missed the formal thank you and we made up for it in the afternoon, but I want to do it now to make sure that I don't forget it, because we have a vote after—and that is to say that it is

the last day for our pages. We want to thank our pages for the wonderful work that they've done in this House.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I take it, by that, that you would like to have them come back on Monday?

## ORDER AND DECORUM IN CHAMBER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** This morning indicated to me that we could be boisterous to a certain degree. All I'm going to ask is that our energy be positive. I seek co-operation from the House on the issue that I've spoken to before, and that is, when I stand, we need quiet, and no one throws in shots as I'm sitting. I will still be strict on that one. Thank you for your co-operation.

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Deputy Premier. Durham students have now been out of school for 19 days. That's the longest teachers' strike in over 25 years. That's the longest students have been out of a classroom in over 25 years.

Deputy Premier, your government has brought this upon itself with a bargaining process that is being described as flawed and dysfunctional. The onus is on your government to get these students back in the classroom where they belong before they lose their year. Will you do that?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As I've said many times, we agree that the students need to be back in class. We want the students to be back in class, and I agree, they have been out for a distressingly long time. But we also know that the only way that we're going to get them back in class is if we negotiate. We need to have a negotiated settlement, so we are certainly prepared to be at the table and to stay at the table.

I know the school board associations are prepared; I would certainly hope that the unions will be prepared to get back to the table, because the only way we are going to resolve this is through negotiation, Speaker. We know that we have to get a collective agreement. That will end the strikes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Deputy Premier: Students want to be back in the classroom. Teachers want to be back in the classroom. Parents want their children back in the classroom.

If the Ontario Labour Relations Board's decision is appealed, high school students may be out of the classroom for weeks on end. We're hearing that students at one Durham high school have been told to clean out their lockers because they're not expected to be back in the

classroom before the end of the school year. Durham College has said that if these students don't graduate by August 22, they cannot offer them admission for next year.

Deputy Premier, these students' futures and their careers are at very serious risk. Get the deal done. Get these students back into the classroom and graduating next month as they should be.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm very concerned if that's the information that is being relayed by the party opposite to students and their families because, as things have unfolded, at the moment—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —my message has been that we fully expect that the kids will be back in the classroom because we expect to succeed with getting a collective agreement.

It's very important that what students are doing right now is making sure that whatever work they can do to keep up their courses—if they have assignments and projects that they know will be required for the end of the semester, they should be doing them right now.

In fact I know that the Durham board, the Rainbow board and the Peel board all have Internet course resources on their websites. I would encourage students and parents to make sure the students go to those websites and they do—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

1040

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Acting Premier: The Premier and this education minister have made no progress on any of the three boards where the teachers are currently on strike. OSSTF is in a position to call strikes in four more boards: Halton, Lakehead, Waterloo and Ottawa-Carleton. Thousands more students could be out of the classroom before the end of the school year. Thousands more students could lose their school year entirely, and their graduation.

Deputy Premier, get the Premier to use those mediation skills she so often talks about, get the parties back to the table and get the job done and the students back in the classroom.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I would like to remind the member opposite that I am not at the Durham table. I am not at the Rainbow table. I am not at the Peel table. I am at the central table and that is where we're working very hard. But I'm really not going to take a lesson from the people who said that they were going to fire 22,700 education workers and teachers. They were asked during the last campaign: "Will it mean fewer teachers?" And their leader said, "It does. It will mean fewer teachers in our system."

If that's how they thought they were going to do labour relations, believe me, that wasn't going to get you labour peace. We know that the way to do labour peace—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Carry on, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I repeat: We are ready and willing to negotiate at the central table. I remain committed to that. The Premier remains committed to that. Negotiation is the solution.

## TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is also to the Deputy Premier. Deputy Premier, 60% of Durham College students come from the Durham region. As you are well aware, Durham grade 12 students have been out of the classroom for four weeks. Their graduation is at risk. Durham College has said that they can't admit students who haven't graduated by August 22.

Deputy Premier, will you promise these students that they will graduate this year?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As I've explained before, I've met with Colleges Ontario. I've met with COU, the Council of Ontario Universities. We've met with the application centres and—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** August 22.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds-Grenville.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** What we know is that—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Durham College, August 22.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Leeds-Grenville, second time.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Rather than heckling, I would have thought you might actually want the information that was helpful to the students and the parents who are out there worrying about this.

We have the commitment from the colleges and universities that we will work together because we know that we need to find solutions to make sure that these students can get into the colleges and the universities. We will certainly work together to make sure—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** —that there are solutions—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Minister, it's about three times now. When I stand, you sit down. You do not finish. Your time is up.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the Deputy Premier: 22,000 Durham students are out of the classroom right now. Today is their 19th day. Next week is a constituency week and there will be no question period or accountability. No negotiation or bargaining is taking place. We know, and I think you know now, that Bill 122, the two-tier bargaining, is a complete failure.

Minister, we need this dithering to stop. We need leadership. What action do you propose next week that will guarantee that Durham students will be back in the classroom?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Education.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, no, no. The minister already has the floor. Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Sorry. First off, let's just follow up on Durham College. Durham College has already an-



nounced—not a ministry direction—to Durham students that Durham will be accepting students based on the mid-term marks that were already submitted. So in fact the issue that has been raised by the member opposite—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** In fact, Durham College has already made the decision that they will accept the mid-term marks, and there is absolutely no problem.

One of the things that we have—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Stormont, second time.

Answer?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** One of the things we've noticed is parents being uncertain about putting down deposits. I want to encourage parents to get—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** It's back to the Deputy Premier, I guess through the Minister of Education: With 72,000 secondary students out of the classroom, you continually finger point the problem at someone else.

The two-tiered bargaining system simply is not working. We all know that; all sides know that. It is a failure, and the victims now are the 72,000 students. It is your Bill 122, it is your two-tiered system that is putting the education system in chaos.

Being mystified or perplexed is not enough. We need leadership, not dithering. Will you promise that the 72,000 students will graduate and not be left disadvantaged when they attend college or university this coming fall?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think we need to go back and think about how we arrived at Bill 122. We negotiated. We consulted. We talked to all four trustee associations. We talked to the directors. We talked to all the unions. We went through this process of drafting and consulting and redrafting and consulting.

Through all that process of working with all the partners who are concerned with collective bargaining in the education sector, this party remained obstinately opposed to having any part in that negotiation, in that discussion, in that consultation. They just kept saying "No, no, no." Well, I'm really not surprised that the member doesn't like the legislation; they all voted against it in the first place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question. The leader—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There already are three people very close.

New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Acting Premier. History is being made in Ontario today. Ontario's independent watchdogs have written to the Premier saying that her Hydro One sell-off is unacceptable and un-

democratic. That's historic. It shows just how arrogant this government has become.

The Auditor General, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, the privacy commissioner, the Integrity Commissioner and the French Language Services Commissioner: All are calling on the provincial government to reverse plans in the budget bill. Will the Liberals listen to Ontario's non-partisan, independent officers and reverse their plan to sell off Hydro One?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I have to say we welcome the dialogue that's happening across this province about our plan to build more infrastructure and broaden the ownership of Hydro One.

Let me be clear: Publicly traded companies have different oversight mechanisms than provincially owned assets, but there are still oversight mechanisms—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I have to say that this was a decision we did not come to lightly. We have very carefully weighed the public interest, and we are convinced that the public interest is met by retaining regulation of the energy industry, but broadening the ownership so we can build badly needed infrastructure across this province—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Kevin O'Leary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay, second time.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** That's why we're doing this: to build the infrastructure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This government is becoming more undemocratic by the day, and Ontario's non-partisan, independent watchdogs are calling the government out.

The Liberals have made it clear they don't respect our independent officers. Well, I can tell you that New Democrats do respect them.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Economic Development.

1050

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** These officers have legislated authority to hold governments, provincial agencies and corporations accountable. Why are the Liberals taking a page—

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Don't have the courage to build infrastructure.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Economic Development—second time.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** —out of the Stephen Harper playbook by shutting down our independent officers and slamming the door on democracy and accountability?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Just a reminder to the leader of the third party about our commitment—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** That's not very progressive.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Our commitment to independent officers of the Legislature is stronger than any government in recent memory.

Let's just review: We actually created the new Financial Accountability Officer. We created the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. We made the French Language Services Commissioner independent. We expanded the Ombudsman role to include municipalities, school boards and publicly funded universities. The Integrity Commissioner now has strengthened oversight of lobbyist rules and government expenses. There are new, tougher rules for the Information and Privacy Commissioner when it comes to offences.

We are the party that has expanded the number of independent officers and expanded the roles—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontario's watchdogs are independent, and they are non-partisan. Their job is to tell the hard truth, no matter what party is in power. The Liberals are trying to muzzle those watchdogs because they want to keep the Hydro One sell-off and Hydro One going forward secret and under wraps so that the people of this province have no idea what the heck is going on in that corporation.

Ontarians—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure is warned.

Carry on, please.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians deserve accountability. Ontarians deserve transparency in their most important utility.

Will the Liberals stop trying to muzzle the Auditor General, the Ombudsman, the Financial Accountability Officer, the privacy commissioner, the Integrity Commissioner and the French Languages Services Commissioner and stop the sell-off of Hydro One today?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I don't think anybody's trying to muzzle anyone. The independent officers of the Legislature have indicated their thoughts and we welcome that.

We are also delighted that Denis Desautels, the former Auditor General of Canada, has now indicated that he will ensure fairness throughout the IPO process. That is a very important role and we are delighted that Denis Desautels has agreed to take on this important responsibility because we agree with the third party. We agree that Ontarians demand that there be oversight and that there be a fair and transparent process.

The member opposite has been talking about the impact on rates. They also know full well that the rates have always been, and will continue to be, set by the Ontario Energy Board. It's—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is also for the Deputy Premier. Not only is this government muzzling the independent officers of the House, they're also muzzling Ontarians. Ontarians have less than five hours to get their names on the list to have their say on Hydro One for only four meager days of hearings here in Toronto.

We've seen tens of thousands of people, of all political stripes, from all walks of life, who want to send the Liberals a message that they don't want to have to pay for the Liberals' sell-off of Hydro One. They don't want to be the ones left paying the price for this wrong decision.

The question is: Why are the Liberals shutting out the people of Ontario who actually own Hydro One? Why are they not allowing hearings to happen around this province? Why are they muzzling Ontarians?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm going to disagree with the premise of the question posed by the leader of the third party. In fact, what we are doing is we are enhancing the public's input into our budget process by ensuring that there are six days of committee consideration into the budget by holding hearings at Queen's Park.

The member opposite knows that these six days are three times more than the number of days that have been used by all three political parties who've been in government over the last 25 years in this province when it comes to the consideration of the budget. In fact, I remind the member opposite that when her party was in government, in two out of four budgets they tabled, they only allowed one day each for budget consideration, and for the last two budgets, in 1993 and 1994, they allowed for zero days of budget consideration when they were discussing things like the social contract—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The Premier knows that there are people from London, from Etobicoke, from Peel, from Sudbury, from Thunder Bay, from Oakville, from Barrie, from Cambridge and from communities across this province who don't want to pay the price for the Hydro One sell-off. They can't afford higher hydro bills. Every Liberal MPP knows this because they've been getting those emails—tens of thousands of people.

Are Liberal backbenchers going to go back home to their constituencies next week, to their ridings, and tell their constituents why it is that they are going to be the ones who are going to pay the price for this Hydro sell-off, and yet they have no interest whatsoever in hearing their opinion or what they have to say?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I can tell you what our constituents are talking about. Our constituents are talking about the need for public infrastructure in our communities. What our constituents want is to put an end to gridlock and congestion on our highways so that they can get to work in an expedient way and home in a timely fashion



so they can spend time with their families. The only thing that the NDP is trying to do is block that kind of progress, because we need to pass this budget in order to have programs that will help to fund our infrastructure, to reduce our auto rates and, of course, to ensure that we have retirement income security through a new pension plan.

What the NDP is suggesting through the leader of the third party is nothing but stalling tactics. They do not want progress—that will help ease the lives of Ontarians—by ensuring that this budget does not pass.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Families and businesses cannot afford to pay the price for the Premier's wrong-headed sell-off of Hydro One. But Ontarians have less than five hours to get their names on the list to be heard at the public hearings. They can call 416-325-3526 or they can email [kkoch@ola.org](mailto:kkoch@ola.org) to get on the list and tell the Liberals what they think of Hydro One. The number again: 416-325-3526 or [kkoch@ola.org](mailto:kkoch@ola.org). The Premier is trying to shut people down, Speaker. She's hunkering down here in Toronto—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** She's hunkering down here in Toronto, making it as difficult as she possibly can for the people outside of Toronto to be heard in this process.

When will the Premier, when will the Liberal government, start listening to the people of this province, the people across Ontario, and stop this wrong-headed sell-off of Hydro One?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, we are listening to Ontarians, and Ontarians are telling us every single day—and not only us, but all members of this Legislature—that they want us to invest in our infrastructure. They want us to build roads and bridges in our communities. They want us to make sure that we have good public transit and transportation. There is no more time for inaction when it comes to building 21st-century infrastructure in the province of Ontario.

The only thing the NDP is interested in, the only thing the NDP wants to do is block this budget so those investments are not made in our communities. That is unacceptable, Speaker. We want this budget passed so that we not only build critical infrastructure in our communities across the province but also reduce our auto premium rates and also ensure retirement income security for Ontarians.

## NURSES

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Deputy Premier. As we begin to celebrate Nursing Week in Ontario, there are more than 1,000 nurses who are not celebrating. You are firing nurses at hospitals right across the province. We all, here in this House, have examples. In my hometown of North Bay, you have fired 94 full-time

health care workers, including 54 RPNs, and you fired 34 part-time workers, including 14 RPNs.

Tomorrow I'm at our hospital's Take Your MPP to Work event. Deputy, what should I tell the remaining nurses who fear you'll be firing them next?

**1100**

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** One of the things you can tell them is that there are 24,000 more nurses working in this province than were working here 10 years ago. In fact, you can also tell them that more than 3,500 nurses were added in 2013 and a similar number in 2014.

You can tell them that we've worked hard to increase the proportion of nurses working full-time in the past decade. We've increased the percentage of nurses in this province working full time by 14%. You can tell them that we've had more than 18,000 new nursing graduates go through our nursing graduate guarantee, getting them that first experience in the workplace. You can tell them about the late career nursing initiative; more than 20,000 experienced nurses have been provided with the opportunity to benefit from that program and work in less physically demanding circumstances in hospital and other environments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Deputy, nobody believes any of the numbers you ever tell us. You're the same people who told us the gas plant cancellation would cost \$40 million—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Someone's edgy. I'm standing.

Please finish.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you.

These are the same people who said the gas plant scandal would cost \$40 million when it's over \$1 billion. You say you're hiring nurses—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** —but you're actually firing nurses. In New Liskeard, 18,000 hours of nursing care were cut. In Timmins, 40 front-line health care workers were fired. In the Soo—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation, second time.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, you were too busy heckling to hear me say it the first time.

Please finish.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** In the Soo, 12,500 hours of nursing care are gone. All beds in Penetanguishene hospital are closed. Quinte lost 58 RNs. Cuts in Scarborough, Petrolia, Stratford, Seaford, Clinton—the list goes on.

Deputy, why do you continue to say one thing when the exact opposite is the truth?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I find it unbelievable that the member opposite is speaking this way because the way

that they would have chosen to get to balance was by firing thousands of health care workers and thousands of nurses across this province. I find it unbelievable to hear this coming from a party that referred to our nurses as obsolete hula hoops.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville is warned.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** That party referred to our professional nurses around this province as obsolete hula hoops.

We know that your plan to get back to balance was to cut 100,000 jobs. We know many of those jobs would have come from our nurses.

In fact, yesterday I had the privilege of announcing changes to home and community care across this province, which includes substantial new investments in nurses and nursing hours to benefit people living in the home and community environment.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Hundreds of teachers are rallied outside—actually, thousands and thousands of teachers are rallied outside—to tell the government to stop sitting on the sidelines of negotiations. Tens of thousands of students are out of class and wondering if the school year is lost. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been cut from our already-underfunded education system. Our schools have been thrown into chaos. Contrary to Liberal spin, Ontarians know that the government holds ultimate responsibility over education in this province.

Why is this Liberal government forcing students and families to pay the price for their reckless cuts and their neglect on the education file?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I'm not sure what school system you're talking about, but the one I want to talk about is the one where we've made major investments in our school system.

They keep saying that we cut special education. I'd like to tell you something about special education funding, Speaker. Let's have a little bit of actual information. We have increased special education spending by \$1.1 billion, up to \$2.72 billion. That is a 68% increase in special education spending. Do you know how much that is in comparison to the cost of living? That's about triple the increase in the cost of living, Speaker. So I'm not going to take any lessons from these people, who actually campaigned—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Instead of lighting a fire under negotiations, the Premier and her government are playing the blame game—blame the teachers, blame the school boards—but never admitting their government is failing families across this province. The Minister of Education,

this minister, is sitting on the sidelines and doing nothing while the process is being circumvented.

Will the Deputy Premier and her government stop sitting on the sidelines and get up and start making sure that students get back into the classroom, where they belong?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I really would like to know exactly what it is she's proposing. However, I can say two things.

Number one, we are at the central table, willing to negotiate with any of our partners who would like to be there.

But what I would also like to talk about, because she keeps saying we've got the education system in chaos—I talked to you about the special education funding. One of the things we've been able to do with that special education funding, Speaker, is actually look at what our special education students are able to achieve. When we use the EQAO results to track our special education students, we find that the grade 3 writing scores for our grade 3 special education students have gone up 39%. What that tells me is that—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Start the clock.

I'm going to warn the minister: It has been four times now where I stand and you continue. You're warned.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Throw her out.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order—second time.

#### YOUTH SERVICES

##### SERVICES À LA JEUNESSE

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** Ma question est pour la ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse.

May 14 marks Children and Youth in Care Day, an opportunity to recognize the resilience and strength demonstrated by young people in the care of the province. As someone who began her career as a social worker working at the children's aid society, I understand that the most important action we can take for children, and especially youth in the care of the province, is to give them a strong foundation for a bright future.

Nous savons que la plus importante action que nous pouvons prendre pour les enfants, et spécialement les jeunes qui sont pris en charge par la province, est de leur donner une base solide pour un avenir meilleur.

In order to help mark this special day, can the government inform this House on ways in which it is continuing to help youth who have been in care reach their full potential?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to acknowledge the MPP from Ottawa—Orléans for her question and the work she has done in child welfare. Thank you so much.



I just want to add, Speaker, that a number of us this morning were at a celebration of Children and Youth in Care Day with our provincial advocate and the foundation of the children's aid societies. I was there with both my critics, and MPP Wong as well, who actually put forth the motion, the private member's business, to create Children and Youth in Care Day.

We know that by supporting youth leaving the care of the province during their late teens and their twenties, we're focusing on their education and well-being. We have a lot of new programs and services to help youth transitioning into adulthood, and we've increased the minimum financial support for these youth to \$850 a month.

We know there's more to do, but we—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

1110

**M<sup>me</sup> Marie-France Lalonde:** J'aimerais remercier la ministre pour sa réponse.

I'm glad to hear that our government is taking the voices of youth and children in care into account and helping them transition into adulthood. The foundation of success is education, and it is therefore crucial to make sure youth leaving care can access the programs and training they need.

Could the government highlight some of the ways it is helping youth leaving care get the education they need to lead successful adult lives?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Our government is focusing on ensuring that youth transitioning from care get a great opportunity for education and success. We provide \$2,000 a semester to youth formerly in care who are enrolled in OSAP-eligible post-secondary training programs. We also cover up to 50% of tuition for more young people, thanks to expanded grant eligibility, and we partner with 30 post-secondary educational institutions to cover full tuition for crown wards in Ontario and youth formerly in care.

We know that education is key to a prosperous future for all young people, so we'll continue to make education services and programs accessible for all youth, particularly the youth who are leaving our care.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Attorney General. Do the justices of the peace you appoint have a code of conduct they are expected to follow?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Yes, indeed, the justices of peace, the judges, have a code of conduct to follow, and they are held to the highest manner of discipline that the position calls for.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I would suggest to you it needs updating.

Your Premier posted on Twitter: "Whether or not it's caught on film, sexual harassment at work is no joke." We agree.

Hydro One fired Shawn Simoes less than a day after he made sexual comments to Shauna Hunt, so why did it take you five years, two separate convictions and multiple women having to come forward on sexual harassment for you to fire Errol Massiah as a justice of the peace?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** No, I'm getting quiet.

Attorney General.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** As I said, Mr. Speaker, the justices of the peace are held to a very important level of discipline—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Dufferin-Caledon.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** If people have a concern about what they're doing, they should put in a complaint against them.

There is a committee that is very independent from the government that reviews the situation and then brings about recommendations for the action that we should be taking.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Dufferin-Caledon, second time.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** It's very important that the public knows that they can trust the process, that the review of the discipline of the situation is—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Deputy Premier. Today, legal experts released an opinion that says that Liberal plans to sell off Hydro One will end public control of the company. Those experts say the budget bill makes it clear the government's "true intent is to relinquish control and stewardship of the electricity market. The provision for the purported retention of 40% public ownership is essentially a marketing ploy for legislative reforms that will certainly abandon public control of Hydro One."

Does the Deputy Premier think that anyone believes her marketing ploy?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to talk about some of the oversight mechanisms that will be in place when Hydro One becomes a publicly traded company.

We are absolutely committed to doing what is in the public interest, and when it comes to hydro rates, the Ontario Energy Board will continue, as it does now, in the future to set those rates as it does for other energy companies.

We are committed to selling no more than 60% of the company, and we are ensuring that major decisions made by Hydro One will require a two-thirds vote, giving us de facto control of the company. We will have the ability to fire the whole board of directors, and we will nominate 40% of the board of directors. So we are finding that right balance, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** The Liberals' marketing ploy on the Hydro One sell-off is all based on keeping a minority 40% stake. But the experts are clear: There is nothing to prevent private investors from outvoting the government. They say, "Even if a 40% stake is preserved, effective control can shift to the private sector." Those same experts confirm that Ontario could end up with well under 10% in public hands. The government is trying to sell Hydro One to the bankers, and they're trying to sell Ontarians a pig in a poke.

Will the government stop the sell-off today?

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** Speaker, we are committing to build the infrastructure that this province so badly needs. The party opposite might think that there's some other pot of money under the rainbow we can build the infrastructure with, but I tell you, Speaker, on this side we know that infrastructure costs money, as did the NDP during the last election.

We are looking carefully at the assets we already have that we can put to better use by building the assets of infrastructure. We're committed to improving the infrastructure in the province. We will use the resources of the people of Ontario, whether it's buildings that we don't need to own, whether it's land we don't need to own or whether it's a share in Hydro One. We're putting our assets to work on the priorities of the people of this province.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Earlier this week, there was a front-page story in the Toronto Star about the rise of temporary work in the GTA and what that means for today's economy. It's clear from that and other signals that our economy has evolved significantly over the last number of years. It's clear that workplaces are having to adapt to this, and employees are having to adapt to this new economy as well.

Minister, could you share with us what our government is doing to ensure workplace laws keep up with this evolving economy?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the honourable member for that excellent question. The government recognizes that Ontario's labour relations and employment standards laws should keep up with the changing economy. In fact, in the mandate letter I received from the Premier last year, the Premier asked that I undertake a review of Ontario's changing workplaces with a view to ensuring that our labour laws and our employment standards do indeed meet the needs of our modern economy. In that regard, we've appointed two excellent special advisers, labour lawyer Michael Mitchell and former

justice John C. Murray, both of whom have excellent reputations and some expertise in labour law.

The advisers will conduct broad consultations across the province with respect to the Labour Relations Act and the Employment Standards Act. They're going to consider the findings from these consultations when they make the final recommendations to me.

Speaker, I look forward to sharing more in the supplementary about the process as it unfolds.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Minister, you mentioned that Justice Murray and Mr. Mitchell will be conducting broad consultations across the province. I know you announced the appointment of the advisers in February, but I'm sure there are many members of the public who are eager to know when and how they can provide input. Workers and employers alike in almost every corner of this province have expressed interest in sharing their thoughts, but as MPPs, we have not yet been able to direct them as to how they can share their perspective.

Minister, could you please give the members of this House and the public an idea of when they can expect those consultations to get under way?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you again to the member. This is something that I would hope would be of interest to all members of this House, and I'm asking that they advise their constituents of the information that I'm about to give. We're certainly trying to get it out through social media and on the websites that the Ministry of Labour has. I'm very pleased to announce that the special advisers will be kicking off their public consultations right here in Toronto on June 16. From Toronto, they'll travel to Ottawa, to Mississauga, to Guelph, to Windsor, London, Sudbury, Hamilton and Thunder Bay, and then they'll be returning in the summer to Toronto.

1120

Members should also note that if groups or individuals, for some reason, cannot make it to a hearing near them to give oral testimony, they can offer written submissions via email to the ministry. Information is available on the ministry's website, along with a guide to the consultations. It's going to outline the process for the submissions to all the interested parties. The Changing Workplaces Review will help ensure that our labour relations laws keep up with the modern economy.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY

**Mr. Norm Miller:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, your government is allowing the OPP helicopter base in Sudbury to be shut down. This helicopter has been providing vital search and rescue services for the north, First Nations and the northern part of Parry Sound district since 1991. Sudbury enjoys good weather for flying most of the year, while the Orillia base is in the snowbelt and experiences lake-effect weather conditions.

Minister, why are you lowering the capabilities at the OPP to support front-line officers and provide search-and-rescue operations in the north?



**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I thank the member opposite for asking this important question. As the member may recall, I have spoken on this issue before in the House when a question was asked by the member from Sudbury, who I am working very closely with on this very important issue.

I want to start by saying that I'm sure the member opposite knows very well that when it comes to decisions that are operational in nature, like a decision made by the OPP as to where to locate their various assets—that's an operational decision. That's a decision that is made by the OPP. That's a decision that is, of course, taken at the behest of the commissioner of the OPP. There's little, if any, influence that is exerted by the government. We need to be mindful of that.

Our number one priority is the safety and security of every Ontarian, which is extremely important. We need to make sure that all the responsibilities and the mandate that is laid out in the Police Services Act is available, and I'll add more in—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** Minister, you're the minister responsible for the OPP.

Just this past Sunday, the Orillia-based helicopter was called to find two lost hikers in Sudbury. When the emergency call came in, they couldn't fly out because of poor weather. Luckily, the Sudbury-based helicopter that was on duty in the north was able to return before dark to locate the hikers. This case demonstrates how safety standards in the north will be negatively affected by the closure of the Sudbury base.

Minister, will you commit to doing whatever you can to ensure an OPP helicopter remains based in the north?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Again, I thank the member opposite, and I want to restate that our number one priority is the safety and security of every Ontarian. Given that the question has been raised about this locally, I have asked my Deputy Minister of Community Safety for more information about this decision. It is important to have the necessary information about how Sudbury and the north are served by aircraft in search-and-rescue operations and how this decision may impact service across the north.

The OPP are mandated to provide certain police services across the province, including aviation support. Of course, they have a responsibility to communicate their decisions effectively so that all communities in Ontario get the information they need to feel safe.

I also want to add that the OPP works very closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and continues to use ministry aircraft based in Dryden, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Muskoka and Sudbury. I will continue to work closely with the members on this issue.

## NURSES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Ma question est pour le ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée.

Yesterday we learned that more nurses are losing their jobs. This time, it's at CHEO, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. The government promised that health care would not shoulder the brunt of their austerity agenda. Clearly, though, it's our front-line nurses who are taking the biggest hit.

Losing a nurse is never good, but losing 27 pediatric nursing positions at CHEO, which cares for some of the sickest children in our province, is just plain wrong. Does this government austerity agenda know no bounds?

How does the minister feel to be balancing the province's budget on the backs of some of the sickest children in this province?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Perhaps, unlike the member opposite, I trust the professionals who work in our hospitals, and I trust the professionals who work in our LHINs, who make those difficult decisions, so that they can ensure that the highest quality of care is provided to Ontarians wherever they may live, whatever age they might be.

I think she understands that we're also in an important transitional period, because when that announcement was being made yesterday, I was making an announcement which would result in a dramatic increase in the number of nurses working in the home and community sector. As we're providing care for individuals and their families closer to home, in their communities, where they want to see that care, where they can be surrounded by their loved ones, where evidence shows that we can care for them effectively—as that transition takes place, we do need to adjust, from time to time, in terms of the funding levels and how we deploy our nurses and other health professionals around the province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Well, 27 full-time equivalent pediatric nursing positions are being cut at CHEO.

Since January 2015, ONA has told us that over 400 full-time-equivalent nursing positions have been cut—the equivalent of close to 800,000 hours of quality RN care cut.

Our most vulnerable deserve more nursing hours, not less. The scientific evidence is clear for everybody to see: Every nurse being cut out of our hospitals puts patient care and patients' lives at risk.

Speaker, this government chose a very, very sad way to ring in Nursing Week, by cutting pediatric nurses at CHEO.

My question is simple: How many more nursing positions will be cut from our Ontario hospitals?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The member opposite is a health care professional, as I am. She understands that when a position in one part of the hospital goes away and emerges in another program in another part of the hospital, that actually results, in the near term, in a reduction in one position and that position being added elsewhere in the hospital.

**Hon. Deborah Matthews:** It's the net that matters.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** It's that net figure that matters most.

I was at CHEO recently, making an announcement for a brand new pediatric chronic pain clinic at that hospital that will result in a significant number of new positions.

Similarly, at the Ottawa Hospital right now, there are active positions for 50 new nurses—50 RNs—that need to be employed at Ottawa Hospital.

So we are making those investments. There is an ebb and flow.

I trust our health care professionals in our hospitals, in our LHINs around this province and in Ottawa to make the right decisions for our patients.

### POLICE SERVICES

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** Ma question s'adresse au ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels.

This week, we are celebrating Police Week in Ontario, an opportunity to honour and recognize the bravery and sacrifice of the men and women from across our province whose life-saving actions keep us safe.

In my community of Burlington, we are fortunate to be ably served by the women and men of the Halton Regional Police Service, whose civilian and sworn officers do an outstanding job in each of Halton's communities.

My late husband was a police officer who served 24 years, first with the Toronto Police Service and then the Ontario Provincial Police, in seven communities across our province. As a result, I have a special appreciation of the important role that police officers play on the front lines every day. Whether they are delivering safety and awareness programs in our schools, attending the scene of a collision, investigating criminal activities or working to prevent serious crime, police officers play a critical role in keeping Ontarians safe.

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister please inform the Legislature what we are doing this week to honour the work of Ontario's police officers?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member from Burlington for her question and thank her for her passion for public and community safety. As she mentioned, she's part of a police family, as I am. My grandfather was a police officer. I share her passion, and I thank her for her advocacy on behalf of community and public safety.

Speaker, each and every day, we are thankful for the hard work and dedication Ontario's police officers show in keeping our communities safe, but this week we are especially thankful to the men and women of our police services, because it is Police Week in Ontario.

Tomorrow is Peace Officers Memorial Day, which is recognized across the world.

It's my privilege to recognize and thank our police officers, along with all the members of the Legislature, for protecting us from harm.

The theme of this year's Police Week is "Discover Policing." Police services across the province have been promoting the profession of policing to the communities they serve and encouraging the public to learn more

about their jobs. Our government is proud of the work they do and the partnership we have with our police officers.

1130

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** Thank you, Minister, for your response. Clearly, our police community is a passion we both share. I appreciate your commitment to honouring the service of the police officers who work hard to keep our communities safe.

Since 2003, Ontario's crime rate has dropped by 36% and Ontario's violent crime rate has dropped by 27%. In fact, Ontario has had the lowest crime rate of any province and territory every year since 2004. We owe a great deal of this progress to our police services.

As we honour them and as we honour their work during Police Week, it is important to reflect on the work that the government can do to help make Ontario even safer. Moving forward, it is important that we work together to develop solutions that will help to address the root causes of crime and other social issues.

Mr. Speaker, through you, can the minister please explain how he plans to build even safer communities across Ontario?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** As we dedicate this week to honouring the commitment of our police forces to keep us safe, it is important that we look at ways in which we are working to build even stronger communities across the province.

We have worked hard to build safer communities. Now we must work smarter to make our communities even safer. Our Strategy for a Safer Ontario is focused on finding smarter and more effective ways to build safer communities across our great province. We are forming collaborative partnerships that include police and other key stakeholders, such as education and mental health and addiction specialists. This is about bringing more people to the table to address the issues that confront our communities at their root cause. This will ultimately help make our communities safer, and our police officers safer as well. Speaker, collaboration and partnership is key in order for us to make decisions around our community safety in a smarter way.

I also want to encourage people, as we celebrate the May Two-Four weekend, to be safe and drive safely as well.

### PESTICIDES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

Minister, I invite you to join me to acknowledge local success. Specifically, the 2014 Provincial Apiarist Annual Report produced by your government says, "Protective measures brought in by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency contributed to a 70% decline of in season bee mortality during the 2014 corn and soybean planting season."

Considering the success of actions taken by Ontario farmers and Ontario industry, why won't you listen to



reports coming from both the Ontario and federal governments, and why are you so intent to rush through regulations that will devastate Ontario farmers?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** As the member may know, we had over a 34% loss in bees this year.

The US Department of Agriculture just reported record losses in the United States of 42%—

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Let's talk about Ontario.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I just said Ontario. That's where I started. So maybe just listen to the answer.

The second thing: We know we've got very significant problems with wild pollinators, for which we do not have numbers yet. We know that this is water-soluble, breaks down and becomes much more toxic, and we're now picking it up in our river streams. Quebec just found it above safe levels in all 20 rivers they studied.

We're applying a precautionary principle, because the science is showing very grave dangers to species, to the integrity of our ecology and to our water invertebrates. We're taking this very seriously and monitoring the science very carefully.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** Minister, may I remind you that just last week at a conference you spoke at, you said—and I paraphrase—that politicians go off the rails when they don't focus on science. In that spirit, I'd like to share with you that the current provincial apiarist report from your government noted that the Ontario honeybee sector is growing and actually ended the 2014 season with a 15% increase in the number of colonies.

Considering these significant numbers show that the honeybee population is growing in Ontario, what is really behind your push to destabilize the \$9-billion Ontario grain sector?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** I've been going out on Fridays to visit soy and grain farmers. I was actually in Huron county, Perth county and Wellington county recently. It has been quite interesting, as I've met a number of grain farmers who share the government's concern. These were people, actually, who wrote me letters, because they were quite upset about it, because they'd gotten a lot of disinformation.

Farmers are going to continue to use neonics on a limited basis. If they have the pests, they will be able to use it. We're working very closely with our friends in agriculture to put in integrated pest management. We're not banning it, and quite far from damage.

We also know that the studies coming out right now from the EPA show no yield benefits for soy, so we're also reviewing the efficacy of both of these on corn and soy, while they're effective on others. There will be PMR studies coming out from the federal government in the very near future—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My question is to the Minister of Transportation. In 2006, the government approved the

four-laning of Highway 3 from Windsor to Leamington, and promised that the entire project would be completed by this year. The government got most of this project done, but the last phase, from Essex to Leamington, is still incomplete.

In 2013, we were told that shovels would be in the ground by 2018, but late last year, we found that the government is rebuilding this section of Highway 3 without the four-laning.

Minister, does this mean that the government intends on ripping up the road, repaving it and then ripping it up again in 2018 for the four-laning, or has the government decided to postpone the highway widening for another generation?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member from Essex for his question. He alluded to this in his question, but of course he would know that to date our government has invested nearly \$50 million to widen the 13 kilometres of the highway from the city of Windsor to the town of Essex. He would also know that the work to widen the remaining two-lane section of Highway 3 between Leamington and Windsor is listed as part of our southern highways program under planning for the future.

What I certainly find remarkable when I hear questions like this coming from members of the NDP caucus is that day after day in this chamber, week after week, for as long as I've served as a member of Parliament representing Vaughan, that member and that party have consistently voted against every single budget measure that will help us invest in transportation infrastructure. They fought us every step of the way. It's a shame that they don't want to put our money where their mouths are.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** My predecessor, as the member for Essex, the late Bruce Crozier, called the four-laning of Highway 3 one of his greatest accomplishments. It was one of his many accomplishments; I respected him a lot. He knew that this highway was a vital link for our economy, especially the expanding greenhouse industry, and for the safety of drivers.

When he died in 2011, the highway was aptly named Bruce Crozier's Way. Will this government finish what Bruce started and commit to the four-laning of Bruce Crozier's Way from Essex to Leamington in the next update of the government's five-year southern highways program?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I didn't get a chance to say in my initial answer that in 2014-15 this government, under the leadership of Premier Kathleen Wynne, is investing almost \$2.5 billion to expand and repair Ontario's highways, roads and bridges.

But again, what's remarkable is that we are dedicating this \$2.5 billion to support highways, roads and bridges across the province of Ontario, including in southwestern Ontario, as part of our budget, both budget 2014 and budget 2015.

The people living in Essex need to know, as I know they do, that that member in 2014—and again in 2015, I assume, I presume, given the tenor of the debate that you've brought forward so far, will also reject this budget.

**Interjection:** Shame.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's a shame.

Thanks very much.

### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock on a point of order.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'd like to introduce my guests this morning: Darin Meek, Kathleen Meek and Taylor Meek from Prince Edward Island, brought to Queen's Park by their cousin, Amanda Meek, who was formerly a Queen's Park aide. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I'd also like to welcome Mark Shirdown, Tyler Thompson and Quinton Herbul. They've travelled from the Huron-Perth area to Queen's Park for the youth civics day.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I ask all members of this House to join me in welcoming Shalini Inham and Martin Inham, parents of the OLIP intern in my office, Justin Khorana-Medeiros. Please welcome them to the House.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd just like to add to my colleague from Kawartha Lakes: Amanda Meek and her family are here to raise funds for the Walk So Kids Can Talk fundraiser, in memory of her cousin Chalyce. Best of luck.

### DEFERRED VOTES

#### BUILDING ONTARIO UP ACT (BUDGET MEASURES), 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 POUR FAVORISER L'ESSOR DE L'ONTARIO (MESURES BUDGÉTAIRES)

Deferred vote on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 91, An Act to implement Budget measures and to enact and amend various Acts / Projet de loi 91, Loi visant à mettre en oeuvre les mesures budgétaires et à édicter et à modifier diverses lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1140 to 1145.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On April 30, 2015, Mr. Sousa moved second reading of Bill 91. All those in favour of the motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Damerla, Dipika  
Del Duca, Steven  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dickson, Joe  
Dong, Han  
Duguid, Brad

Leal, Jeff  
MacCharles, Tracy  
Malhi, Harinder  
Mangat, Amrit  
Martins, Cristina  
Matthews, Deborah  
Mauro, Bill

Rinaldi, Lou  
Sandals, Liz  
Sergio, Mario  
Takhar, Harinder S.  
Vernile, Daiene  
Wong, Soo  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Bailey, Robert  
Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Clark, Steve  
Dunlop, Garfield  
Fedeli, Victor  
Fife, Catherine  
Forster, Cindy  
French, Jennifer K.  
Gates, Wayne  
Gélinas, France  
Gretzky, Lisa

Hardeman, Ernie  
Harris, Michael  
Hatfield, Percy  
Horwath, Andrea  
Hudak, Tim  
Jones, Sylvia  
MacLaren, Jack  
Mantha, Michael  
Martow, Gila  
McDonell, Jim  
Miller, Norm  
Miller, Paul  
Munro, Julia  
Natyshak, Taras

Nicholls, Rick  
Pettapiece, Randy  
Sattler, Peggy  
Scott, Laurie  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Smith, Todd  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Thompson, Lisa M.  
Vanthof, John  
Walker, Bill  
Wilson, Jim  
Yakubuski, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 51; the nays are 41.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 13, 2015, the bill is ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

Before we recess, I would like to offer to all of the members a safe and restful break, but I know that all of you do have other work in your riding and that continues day to day. I appreciate the work that you do.

There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1149 to 1300.*

### ESTIMATES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader on a point of order.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I have a message from the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, the Lieutenant Governor, signed by her own hand.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the year ending March 31, 2016, and recommends them to the Legislative Assembly. Toronto, May 13, 2015. Elizabeth Dowdeswell.

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Joining me in the Legislature today is the Minister of Culture from the province of Nova Scotia, Minister Tony Ince. Nancy Radcliffe is with him; she works with him. Also, Peter Flegel; he's from the Michaëlle Jean Foundation.

### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Baker, Yvan  
Baikissoun, Bas  
Ballard, Chris  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Chan, Michael  
Colle, Mike  
Coteau, Michael  
Crack, Grant

Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fraser, John  
Gravelle, Michael  
Hoggarth, Ann  
Hoskins, Eric  
Hunter, Mitzie  
Jaczek, Helena  
Kiwala, Sophie  
Kwinter, Monte  
Lalonde, Marie-France

McGarry, Kathryn  
McMahon, Eleanor  
McMeekin, Ted  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Potts, Arthur  
Qaadri, Shafiq



Just behind them, I have another special guest: Ylana Harel, a personal friend of mine. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I think many are still arriving, but I really want to send a warm welcome to everyone who is here today for Youth in Care Day. That includes staff from the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, from YouthCAN and from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. Youth and staff from children's aid societies from across the province are here at Queen's Park to learn about civics, Speaker.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I would just like to introduce also in the Speaker's gallery Velma Morgan, who is with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport but is a teacher on leave from a school in my riding, Rawlinson public school. Welcome, Velma.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### ENDANGERED SPECIES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's my pleasure to speak to Endangered Species Day, which takes place tomorrow, May 15. It is a day that we can celebrate the vast wildlife that we have in our province. It is also a day to take note of the serious problems facing over 217 species at risk here in Ontario.

When the Endangered Species Act took effect in 2008, the Blanding's turtle was added to the list. In fact, the UN has designated the Blanding's turtle as a globally endangered animal.

Just last month, the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled that the nine industrial wind turbine projects planned in Prince Edward county would cause "serious and irreversible harm" to the Blanding's turtle. It was gratifying to see someone finally standing up to this Liberal government.

An article in the Globe and Mail from April 21 of this year revealed that three years ago, believe it or not, the Minister of Natural Resources granted this particular wind farm in Prince Edward-Hastings county an "overall benefit permit" which would allow the company to "kill, harm, harass and destroy" habitat for those species because it intended to make up for the harm.

Speaker, the green energy scheme has failed Ontarians. I can only say, in respect of tomorrow, that we can never put the needs of industrial wind turbine companies before our habitat, endangered species or Ontarians. Endangered Species Day and the Blanding's turtle should remind us of that each and every day, all year.

### CHILDHOOD APRAXIA OF SPEECH

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I'm very pleased to rise today, May 14, to mark Apraxia Awareness Day. I want to bring awareness to the community about this speech problem in children, because it is still little known, very misunderstood, and has a huge impact on kids and families.

Childhood apraxia of speech, CAS, is a speech disorder that seriously interferes with a child's ability to develop clear speech. CAS makes it difficult or impossible for an affected child to plan the movements of the lips, tongue, jaw etc. that are needed for speech. Children with CAS generally have a good understanding of language and they know what they want to say, but have difficulty learning or carrying out the complex movements that underlie speech.

Apraxia is one of the most severe of childhood speech and communications disorders. Speech and communication are critical skills for young children to develop. We need to find ways of supporting children with apraxia and their families because speech therapy, the only proven treatment for apraxia, is quite costly and will extend over many years for these children. These children must work and struggle so very hard just to learn a skill—speaking—that comes effortlessly to other children.

I want to acknowledge my constituent Kathryn Ruppert-Dazai for her tireless efforts to improve the lives of Ontario's children struggling with apraxia. Lastly, I want to let Rowan and other children suffering from apraxia know that we care and we support you through your difficult journey.

Learn more about apraxia at [apraxia-kids.org](http://apraxia-kids.org).

### ISMAILI COMMUNITY

#### COMMUNAUTÉ ISMAÉLIENNE

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Es salaam aleikom and Ya Ali Madad. I offer you these greetings, first of all, not only on behalf of the Premier and indeed all caucus members of our government, but all members of provincial Parliament, to the Ismaili community of Canada.

Unfortunately, we learned the tragic news that there was a major attack affecting dozens and dozens of individuals who were murdered in cold blood in Karachi, Pakistan. I have just gotten off the phone with Mr. Mohamed Dhanani, who is the CEO of the Aga Khan council of Canada, to express, on our collective behalf, our shock, our outrage, but perhaps more importantly, our sympathy and our prayers and our pledge to stand firm with the Ismaili community.

I have to say that I have personally benefited very recently from attending a lecture series on pluralism and harmony and global inclusiveness which was being held at the jewel of the crown in Don Valley East, this architectural masterpiece of the Aga Khan Museum and centre. It is deeply tragic and ironic and unsettling that while the lectures themselves are about trying to bring out the very best in us, we still have to confront these types of issues.

Mes pensées et mes prières vont aux familles et aux amis des personnes qui ont péri.

### LEGISLATIVE PAGE PROGRAM

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I wanted to do something a little different today. I want to mention a few words

about the page program here at Queen's Park. I think it's one thing we really do right here at Queen's Park. We run a phenomenal page program bringing these young men and women in grades 7 and 8 here to become part of the legislative process in our great province.

I'm very honoured: In 2012, my granddaughter Rachel came and she fell in love with the page program. She still talks about it to this day. I'm really pleased that for the last five weeks I've had my granddaughter Madison with us. She's a jewel in our family. We love her to death and she's done a phenomenal job.

These young men and women are potentially community leaders of tomorrow. Many of them, I know, right in the building, get involved in political parties, political activism, because at the age of 14 you can get a membership in a political party. I hope it's the Tory party for you folks.

I also want to thank the legislative staff here, because there's a beautiful picture downstairs on the wall of the page program from about 1907 or 1908. I've got a copy of it right here, and I asked the staff here to take a picture, very similar, with this year's page program. I'm going to sneak a quick picture of it to everyone. There's the, like, 1905, and this is the 2015 one. It's available to the pages as well.

I just think it's a wonderful program. I'm so pleased you're here and I'm so proud to have my granddaughter here. I think it's a real asset to the province of Ontario that we have the page program.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This is National Nursing Week, a week when we honour and celebrate the incredible work done by our nurses. The date was chosen by no accident for this week. It is built around the birthday of Florence Nightingale, a remarkable woman famous for her services during the Crimean War, but renowned for her social activism and research into the social determinants of health. I had intended to use my time to speak about the nurses and the job they do, but the outcry I have heard from the people of Hamilton Mountain about this government's plan to sell Hydro One demands that I bring their message to this House.

1310

Their message is very clear: Do not sell this vital public asset. They know that Hydro One provides income that helps pay for health care. They know that more privatization in our energy sector means even higher energy bills and, for many, less food on the table. They know who owns Hydro One: the people of Ontario. They know they have never been asked if they want to sell it. Considering this deep concern for social welfare, I feel confident that Florence Nightingale, were she here today, would agree. Do not sell Hydro One.

#### ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I'm rising today to recognize a tremendous milestone in Davenport. On April 18, St.

Mary of the Angels Catholic School celebrated their centennial anniversary. With Thomas Cardinal Collins on hand, a fantastic celebration was hosted at St. Mary of the Angels Church to commemorate this tremendous milestone. At the event, St. Mary's presented a wonderful video of the school's history throughout the years and also encouraged all attendees to contribute to their time capsule.

St. Mary's of the Angels is a wonderful school located just south of Davenport Road on Dufferin Street. St. Mary of the Angels was constructed for the Davenport community in 1915. Since then, St. Mary of the Angels has been at the forefront of guiding and educating Davenport's young people. This makes St. Mary of the Angels one of the oldest Catholic schools in the entire city of Toronto.

Reflective of my riding of Davenport, students at St. Mary of the Angels are from diverse ethnocultural background. In fact, students from St. Mary's come from around the world; 14% of students were born outside of Canada, and over 63% speak a language other than English at home.

I am so proud to represent this fantastic school here at Queen's Park. I would like to recognize all the past and present principals, teachers and staff for their commitment to students and education. In particular, I would like to thank principal Manuela Sequeira for her leadership in our community.

#### CAILYN PERRY

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'm pleased to rise today to recognize a very impressive, young and very bright constituent from my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. Cailyn Perry, whom you've all gotten to know while she has served so dutifully as a legislative page in the assembly, received recognition on May 2 during the Grey and Simcoe Foresters Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps 117th Annual Review in Owen Sound. Although I won't have enough time to recognize all of Cailyn's accomplishments, as there are so many, I'd like to mention a few of them.

Cailyn has been with the Owen Sound junior naturalists since she was seven years old and was twice awarded with Camp Kawartha environmental leadership. As a Girl Guide, Cailyn achieved all badges possible in Sparks, Brownies and Guides and received the Lady Baden-Powell award. No doubt there will be more awards for young Cailyn when she returns to Pathfinders next year.

Cailyn is also a founding member of the first corps Navy League Cadet Corps in Owen Sound and earned awards in best dressed, best department, perfect attendance for all four years, Esprit-de-Corp and overall top cadet. She also achieved top rank of Chief Petty Officer First Class and Company Coxswain. Furthermore, Cailyn holds Lance Corporal rank with the Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps and was recognized as Top First-Year Cadet.



Academically, Cailyn is top-notch, too, and makes honour roll every year. She was speech finalist in grades 4 to 6 and semi-finalist in grade 6 regionals. In grade 7, she achieved gold at both school and Bluewater regional science fairs.

In her spare time, Cailyn is a member of the school band and choir and regional track, as well as serving on the environmental club and volunteering as a kindergarten helper, lunch monitor, office helper and bus monitor. Cailyn is also a budding ballerina and aspires to study engineering.

Mr. Speaker, I invite members to congratulate this spectacular young lady from Chatsworth, Ontario, and to join me in wishing her continued success in the future and asking her to keep her eyes and heart on her dreams.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Best wishes to all the pages.

## NURSES

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's a great pleasure, as a nurse, to rise today in acknowledgment of National Nursing Week.

National Nursing Week is from May 11 to 17 and occurs, not only alongside the International Nurses Day, but also Florence Nightingale's birthday on May 12. This year's Canadian Nurses Association theme, "Nurses: With you every step of the way", emphasizes how important nurses are in all of our lives, at every age, in all health situations, for all Canadians.

My nursing colleagues in Cambridge Memorial Hospital and indeed across Ontario walk alongside their patients each and every day, providing a supportive hand to those just learning to walk again after a stroke, supporting those trying to adopt healthier lifestyles and encouraging others who have mental health or addictions issues.

Nurses in community, CCACs and nurse practitioner-led clinics help to teach new parents how to care for their babies, demonstrate how to use crutches or wheelchairs, and care for patients nearing the end of their life—sometimes, in my community, at Lisaard House.

Nurses dedicate themselves to their profession in a tangible way, touching the lives of patients young and old and from all walks of life.

This past April, the Two Rivers Family Health Team in my riding of Cambridge was designated as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization by the RNAO. That was a very proud designation. Two Rivers is the first family health team to achieve this designation and has implemented various nursing best practice guidelines, ensuring that nurses stand with their patients at each and every stage.

Our nurses help, and they heal. Thank a nurse today.

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE DAY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** Celebrating the second anniversary of Ontario Children and Youth in Care Day, I had the

pleasure of attending the first-ever five14 Talks this morning, hosted by the Children's Aid Foundation and the Provincial Child and Youth Advocate.

Children and Youth in Care Day provides a yearly opportunity to recognize issues facing current and former children and youth in care, reduce stigma and celebrate their contributions to the province.

The creation of this day was based on the recommendations from the 2011 Youth Leaving Care Hearings and was realized through a private member's bill put forward by the former MPP Teresa Piruzza in 2012, and myself in 2013.

In 2014, the Children and Youth in Care Day Act was passed. As the Provincial Child and Youth Advocate said, this day "will help take children and youth in care out of the shadow. It will confirm their importance to us and in so doing allow us to celebrate them and recommit to their well-being."

Thank you to all the former and current children and youth in care for sharing your experiences and encouraging us to do better. Thank you to all of the organizations and the individuals who advocate for children and youth on a daily basis and support these young people.

Mr. Speaker, today is one more way to show that we value our young people and acknowledge the unique experiences they face, but it also acts as a reminder of our commitment to help them reach their full potential.

## MEMBER'S BIRTHDAY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Leeds—Grenville on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Point of order, Speaker: In our Westminster system it's very important for the House leaders to get along, so as House leader for the PC Party, I ask all members to join me in wishing the member for Timmins—James Bay a very happy birthday.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order, the member from Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I had warned members of my caucus that if anybody did this, they would get midnight sitting duty for two weeks straight. I'm putting him on.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Now I know why the member was a little antsy this morning in question period.

I thank the member for his point of order.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that pursuant to standing order 98(c), a change has been made in the order of precedence on the ballot list for private members' public business such that Ms. Thompson assumes ballot item number 72 and Mr. Dunlop assumes ballot item number 76.

1320

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

APRAXIA AWARENESS  
DAY ACT, 2015LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR  
DE LA SENSIBILISATION  
À L'APRAXIE

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill 102, An Act to proclaim May 14 as Apraxia Awareness Day / Projet de loi 102, Loi proclamant le 14 mai Jour de la sensibilisation à l'apraxie.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Childhood apraxia of speech is considered a neurological speech disorder that affects a child's ability to clearly and correctly pronounce syllables and words. The most obvious thing that others notice is the child has significantly limited or unclear speech.

I would like to thank young Matthew Brennan who lives in Mississauga, who has apraxia of speech and has now overcome it with the help of speech therapists and is doing really well. Congratulations, Matthew, and to the parents who went and signed petitions all across Ontario to try and bring awareness to this important childhood speech disorder. I'd like to thank Matthew's parents, David Brennan and Lisa Marie Ruffolo Brennan, for their great work on this important childhood issue.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
Introduction of bills?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order, the member from Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, you will know that we are going to be out of an Environmental Commissioner by Monday. I would seek unanimous consent to move the unanimous consent motion to appoint a temporary Environmental Commissioner.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins-James Bay is seeking to put forward a motion—putting forward a motion to extend the Minister of the Environment's—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I need to have consent to put forward a motion without notice. That's what I'm doing.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

A point of order, the member from Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, I just have to say that we do need to make an appointment. I have a motion here that would extend that for six months or until such

time that a new person is hired. That is what we've always done in this assembly, and I seek consent—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I don't need the explanation because the motion has been turned down.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY  
AND RESPONSESCHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE DAY  
JOUR DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES  
PRIS EN CHARGE

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Good afternoon. I am very proud to stand before this House as we—all Ontarians—mark Children and Youth in Care Day.

Monsieur le Président, je suis fière de m'adresser à cette Assemblée alors que nous, et tous les Ontariens et Ontariennes, soulignons le Jour des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge.

In 2014, our government proclaimed May 14 of every year as Children and Youth in Care Day. Today, we recognize the strengths and resilience shown by these children.

I'm happy to introduce 120 youth in care and their chaperones here today in the House—many in the gallery, I see—who were with me earlier attending a Youth Civics Day reception, hosted by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and the Ontario Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth.

They're all here to celebrate this important day and also learn about the Legislature, how their democratic institutions operate, and to meet their local representatives. This day is an opportunity to raise awareness about children and youth of the province and to reaffirm our commitment to supporting them in reaching their full potential.

It was in 2011, when I had just become an MPP, that young people currently and formerly in the care of children's aid societies told us of their personal journeys during the Youth Leaving Care Hearings right here at Queen's Park. As a new legislator at the time, I remember hearing the stories and being very humbled by them, and I was very inspired by their courage.

Building on those hearings, a Youth Leaving Care Working Group was established to build a plan for change to Ontario's child welfare system. The final report, called a Blueprint for Fundamental Change to Ontario's Child Welfare System, told us that children and youth in care need stability in their relationships. They need support to succeed in education and need help with transitions while in care and when leaving care.

Our government has listened carefully and we continue to take action. Notre gouvernement a été à l'écoute et nous continuons à prendre des mesures concrètes.

These young people now have access to a range of new resources and supports that will help them stay in school, pursue post-secondary education and training,



and maintain stronger relationships, all to help them better prepare for leaving care.

For example, we know how important a good education is. That's why our government is providing \$2,000 a semester, through the Living and Learning Grant, to youth formerly in care enrolled in OSAP-eligible post-secondary and training programs, to assist them with their living expenses. We also expanded eligibility so that more youth can receive the Ontario Access Grant for Crown Wards. This grant covers 50% of tuition, up to \$3,000 per year. And we partnered with 30 post-secondary education institutions across the province to cover the full cost of tuition for crown wards and former youth in care.

Our government also knows how important stability is to young people who have experienced upheaval. That's why we've increased the minimum monthly financial support for youth leaving care to \$850, and that's why we are funding 60 youth-in-transition workers to help youth in and leaving care to access the services they need in their communities. And we've partnered with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies to introduce the new Aftercare Benefits Initiative that provides former youth in care with access to prescription drugs, dental and extended health benefits.

And our work continues.

We are developing new resources and training for our front-line staff and caregivers of LGBTQ children and youth in and leaving care. And we're developing mentorship resources so children and youth in care are supported as they transition to adulthood.

All of these initiatives have been informed and developed with youth, by youth, and we'll continue to engage youth as we move forward.

Formally recognizing children and youth in the province's care through a Children and Youth in Care Day will help keep the issues that affect the lives of children and youth in and from care in the public spotlight, and it will remind this House and all Ontarians to stay focused on the children and youth who depend on us.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses.

**Mr. Jim McDonnell:** I'm pleased to respond to the Minister of Children and Youth Services regarding Children and Youth in Care Day.

This is the second time Children and Youth in Care Day has been celebrated in Ontario. However, it's only the first time we can dedicate the appropriate time to recognizing this occasion in the Legislature, as last year the date fell in the middle of a provincial election.

I'd like to begin by thanking all members who made the Children and Youth in Care Day possible, including the member from Scarborough—Agincourt, who sponsored Bill 53 and made today's events possible.

Being taken into care is undoubtedly a shocking experience for any child, as the familiar environment they grew up in is taken away from them. There are many reasons for a child to need care. Parents can become sick, incapacitated or addicted. Sometimes children have to be

rescued from abusive environments. It is imperative, therefore, to ensure that the care system works for the child and eases their transition into and out of the system.

In 2011, the Legislature held the Youth Leaving Care Hearings, the first of their kind in Canada, giving a voice to those who should have had a say all along in the care system they had to experience. We heard how children and youth in care often felt left out of the decision-making about their own lives, or left without supports following their exit from care. Clearly, as legislators, we could do and had to do better.

Currently, there are 48,000 families being followed by children's aid societies, and 23,000 children in care. While the total number may be decreasing, the challenges they face aren't. Sometimes they are compounded by the current regulatory environment around children and youth in care, which can place them in a no-win choice.

**1330**

For instance, we heard in the pre-budget consultations from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies that an adopted older youth will pay for the stability of a permanent home with the loss of many educational supports, such as those for higher education, that they would have continued to receive if they had stayed a child in care.

For other youths aged 16 and 17, a sudden need for first-time children's aid society services is bound to be unmet as the Child and Family Services Act bans CASs from helping 16- and 17-year-olds who haven't been one of their clients beforehand. These youths are left to navigate the difficult nexus between the child support system they are too old for and the adult system that sees them as too young.

Moreover, agencies trusted to manage care arrangements for Ontario's children in need are facing the prospect of the delayed implementation of the Child Protection Information Network by as much as five years. As it is rolled out, we see the close technical cousin of CPIN—SAMS—causing widespread concern among agencies regarding the system's accuracy and stability.

Children's aid societies are also feeling the pressure of stagnant or decreasing funding. In my own riding of Stormont—Dundas—South Glengary, the CAS is facing the real prospect of having to cut services in order to stay afloat. At this time, when the prevention workload is increasing, this kind of neglect puts more children at risk of requiring being taken into care, rather than being followed in their own families. This is unacceptable.

As the critic for children and youth services, I will continue to pressure the government to address these challenges as children's lives and well-being are at stake. They deserve nothing short of a total and unconditional commitment to their safety, happiness and success. This year marks a particularly important step in addressing these failures in the design of our care system as the Child and Family Services Act undergoes a thorough review.

As we celebrate children and youth in care, we must keep in mind our promise to them: to make it easier for

them and their families to leave the care system sooner, easier, happier and better.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** It gives me great pleasure to speak today on behalf of the NDP caucus as we celebrate Children and Youth in Care Day.

Children and Youth in Care Day is the result of a recommendation in My Real Life Book, the report from the Youth Leaving Care Hearings. What the hearings and the report demonstrated was that children and youth in care have something to say—they want to be heard and they want to contribute to make the system work for those children who will follow behind them.

Speaker, their voice is essential as we move forward, and the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has continued to promote youth engagement through the I Do Care Project and Feathers of Hope, an initiative that engages First Nation youth.

Today, allow me to hand the floor over to a few of those youth in the only way I can in this chamber—by giving a voice to their words.

From Patricia: “I have come to learn that the most important things in life are family and permanency. Less changes in a youth-in-care’s life means more time to focus on something else like post-secondary education.”

Brandon said, “I already had my family taken away once, and it was probably the hardest thing in my life. I didn’t know where else to turn or what I was going to do, and when I turn 21, it’s all going to happen again.”

For First Nations children, the problems are often exaggerated. One aboriginal child, who chose not to be named, said this: “I did not have a say if I wanted to attend my cultural things as in pow-wows or sweat lodges. Instead, I went to church.”

These are a few of the quotes from My Real Life Book that indicate how much we have to do. We are all aware of the tragic stories that highlight some of the failures of our system.

But the report includes some comments that reflect good experiences and offer some hope for the future if we attack the problems and learn from our successes.

Kayla, for example, was well-served by the system. She said, “My CAS worker is like the dad I never had. And since my CYW has taken me under her wing, I know I can get through pretty much anything.”

These differing experiences can perhaps be explained by a recent media report which highlights disparities in our child welfare system across the province. From an analysis of reports received by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, it was apparent that the services children in care received depended to a great extent on where that child lived. Significant variations were found in areas such as availability of social and health services, availability of foster homes, the use of group homes, and the number of placements that were imposed on children.

One of the recommendations made by the Youth Leaving Care Hearings Team was to commit to collecting and publishing information on how children in care are doing. They recognized three years ago that this

information was essential, but the government has pretty much ignored that recommendation.

The inquest into the tragic death of Jeffrey Baldwin recommended that a database be established for the entire province by February of next year. The government says they won’t deliver until 2020. That’s almost 20 years after Jeffrey died.

The Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth has said the system is “at best fragmented and at worst confused.”

Millions and millions of dollars are being spent on a database system that can’t be used for another five years, and the relationship between it and the failed SAMS system is not lost on anyone.

This government needs to understand its responsibility to children and youth in care goes beyond handing \$1.5 billion to 46 agencies to do the job in the way that they see fit. They have a responsibility to ensure the well-being of children wherever they may live.

Speaker, Children and Youth in Care Day serves as a reminder each year of the responsibility we share to provide a safe environment where children in the care of the province can flourish and prepare themselves for successful, fulfilling lives as adults.

And it is very much our responsibility. When we take a child into care, we assume the role of parents, and who among us in this chamber who are parents do not see that as the primary responsibility in our lives?

I will give Justine, a former youth in care, the final word: “We are your children, Ontario.”

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I just want to make clear that I want to move a unanimous consent motion without notice, for the appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months, so that we can have somebody in place by Monday.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Timmins–James Bay is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree?

**Interjection:** No.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I heard a no.

It is now time for petitions.

## PETITIONS

### ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Liberal government has brought forward a payroll tax in the form of a mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP); and

“Whereas the Liberal government has not conducted nor released a cost-benefit analysis of this new payroll tax; and



"Whereas internal Ministry of Finance documents show that the Liberals are aware that the ORPP will increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and kill jobs in the province; and

"Whereas a McKinsey and Co. survey shows that more than four out of every five Canadians already save enough for their retirement; and

"Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has stated that a majority of its members would have to lay off workers; and

"Whereas the government's plan would force the cancellation of many existing retirement plans that have better employer contribution rates; and

"Whereas low-income earners will have their retirement savings clawed back under this scheme; and

"Whereas Ontarians cannot afford another tax on top of their already skyrocketing hydro bills and ever-increasing cost of living;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of an Ontario pension tax."

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** "Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize Hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I support this petition and affix my signature.

1340

#### TERRY FOX DAY

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas on March 26, Bill 61, the Terry Fox Day Act, passed second reading with unanimous support from the Ontario Legislature;

"Whereas if passed at third reading before the Legislature rises in June, Bill 61 will proclaim the second Sunday after Labour Day in 2015, September 20, as Ontario's first Terry Fox Day;

"Whereas the second Sunday after Labour Day is the day on which the Terry Fox Run is traditionally held, and September 20, 2015, marks its 35th anniversary;

"Whereas on November 27, 2014, Terry Fox's home province of British Columbia passed similar legislation

proclaiming this same day as Terry Fox Day starting this year;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Legislative Assembly move quickly to pass Bill 61 at third reading before the end of the current session, ensuring that on September 20, 2015, Ontarians can celebrate Terry Fox Day."

I support this petition, sign it and send it to the table with Joshua.

#### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Hydro One rates continue to rise causing undue hardship for Ontario residents, families and businesses;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"By far the major cost associated with our hydro bills is the delivery charge, which is exceeding the price of hydro itself. We demand the removal of all the hidden charges that make up the delivery charge to be replaced with a standard charge, the same for all customers in Ontario that reflects the actual cost of hydroelectric delivery.

"Regulatory charges are inexcusable and need to be removed.

"We demand the immediate removal of the HST on hydro bills. Why is the province of Ontario charging HST on what is, and always has been, a necessity?

"We demand the immediate removal of the debt retirement charge for all customers.

"The time-of-use smart-metering system is also causing serious problems with everyday life. Faulty meters continue to create overbilling issues for thousands of residents. Instead of resolving these overcharges Hydro One continues to force payment through harassment and threats of disconnection.

"Therefore, we demand the removal of all smart meters to be replaced with analog meters.

"We want to be billed a fair and accurate rate for hydro for all customers and we demand action on this matter immediately!"

I agree with this and would pass it on to page Joshua.

#### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas a motion was introduced at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario which reads 'that in the opinion of the House, the operation of off-road vehicles on highways under regulation 316/03 be changed to include side-by-side off-road vehicles, four-seat side-by-side vehicles, and two-up vehicles in order for them to be driven on highways under the same conditions as other off-road/all-terrain vehicles';

"Whereas this motion was passed on November 7, 2013, to amend the Highway Traffic Act 316/03;

"Whereas the economic benefits will have positive impacts on ATV clubs, ATV manufacturers, dealers and rental shops, and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"We call on the Ministry of Transportation to implement this regulation immediately."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Jae Min to bring it down to the Clerks' table.

#### STUDENT SAFETY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a petition here addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with the petition, affix my name and send it with Colton.

#### TRESPASSING

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My petition is to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas when private property is damaged it is left to property owners to repair these damages, and the costs can quickly add up to thousands of dollars. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture has asked for a minimum fine for trespassing and an increase on the maximum limit on compensation for damages;

"Whereas Sylvia Jones's private member's Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, will amend the current Trespass to Property Act by creating a minimum fine of \$500 for trespassing and increasing the maximum compensation for damages to \$25,000; and

"Whereas the Respecting Private Property Act will allow property owners to be fairly compensated for destruction to their property, and will also send a message that trespassing is a serious issue by creating a minimum fine;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"To support Sylvia Jones's private member's Bill 36, the Respecting Private Property Act, and schedule public hearings so that Bill 36 can be passed without further delay."

For obvious reasons, I support this petition, affix my name to it and give it to the page to bring to the table.

#### HOSPITAL FUNDING

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have this petition that has been collected by Stephanie Harris. She's from Sudbury. Given that it's Nursing Week, it's my pleasure to read it. It reads as follows:

"Whereas Health Sciences North is facing major direct care cuts, including: the closure of beds on the surgical unit, cuts to vital patient support services including hospital cleaning, and more than 87,000 nursing and direct patient care hours per year to be cut from departments across the hospital, including in-patient psychiatry, day surgery, the surgical units, obstetrics, mental health services, oncology, critical care and the emergency department; and

"Whereas Ontario's provincial government has cut hospital funding in real dollar terms for the last eight years in a row; and

"Whereas these cuts will risk higher medical accident rates as nursing and direct patient care hours are dramatically cut and will reduce levels of care all across our hospital;"

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to:

"(1) Stop the proposed cuts to Health Sciences North and protect the beds and services;

"(2) Improve overall hospital funding in Ontario with a plan to increase funding at least to the average of other provinces."

I support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Abdullah to bring it to the Clerk.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a petition here addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, a concentration providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentration to protect against adverse health effects; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable



to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

Speaker, I agree with the petition, sign my name to it and send it down with Megan.

#### DEMONSTRATION AT QUEEN'S PARK

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"With great urgency we write to call public attention to the repeated demand of a group of public citizens to stage a demonstration of a deeply offensive and deplorable nature on the grounds of Queen's Park;

"The Al-Quds Day tradition was initiated in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini to endorse and promote a fundamentalist strain of Islam as well as the hatred and destruction of both the Israeli state and the Jewish people. In recent years, rallies have occurred across the globe, including in a number of cities in North America. Organizers and attendees chant slogans that perpetuate these obscene sentiments and wave placards and flags that signify the banned terrorist organization Hamas;

"Regretfully, Al-Quds Day has been celebrated for several years on the grounds of the provincial Legislature, the very institution that acts to protect the rights and dignity of each and every single Ontarian, regardless of religion, creed, orientation or ancestry;

"Although the spirit of Queen's Park seeks to encourage and foster healthy democratic discussion and debate, we, the undersigned, believe a gathering of such a reprehensible nature and blatantly racist ideology should not be permitted on the grounds of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario nor the premises of any provincial or federal institution."

I'm affixing my signature and giving it to Cailyn.

1350

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I have a petition to save the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment

benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

"Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

"Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

I couldn't agree with this more. I'm going to affix my name to it and give it to page Mira to bring to the Clerk.

#### STUDENT SAFETY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have another petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

I agree with the petition, affix my signature and give it to Jae Min to bring down.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time for petitions has expired.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** A point of order. The member for Timmins-James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, you know that we lose our Environmental Commissioner on Monday. I would seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice to appoint a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I am advised that you've already done this, and it was refused.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** A point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** There is no limit on seeking unanimous consent motions. People can change their minds. It's been done a number of times.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I am advised that that's not accurate; you cannot ask to receive consent over and over.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** To be clear, Speaker—point of order—this means we can no longer move any unanimous consent motions with regard to the Environmental Commissioner—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** To the member: Because the request has been made, it's really in the Speaker's discretion if he thinks the vote will change, and I believe it will not.

Orders of the day.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A point of order. How do you know what's in the minds of members?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I don't want to be difficult, but I'll move on with business.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAITE DES PERSONNES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the government should immediately create a provincial task force to combat human trafficking in Ontario, with such task force having a structure, complement and funding model similar to the existing guns and gangs provincial task force.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I rise today to introduce my private member's motion on the creation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking.

Human trafficking is a very serious issue that is currently plaguing our province. Not nearly enough is being done to raise public awareness, to help victims of human trafficking when they break free from their trafficker, or to effectively prosecute and convict the perpetrators of this heinous crime.

Many people think of human trafficking as a faraway problem, one that conjures up images of desperate young women brought to Canada under false pretenses, lorded over by violent, leering men who take pleasure in forcing the helpless into a life of brutal servitude. This char-

acterization, while maybe slightly fantastical, is not incorrect. But if this is the sole impression one has of human trafficking—which I'm afraid is the case with many people—they are misinformed about its scope and pervasiveness in our great province and country. While you may think human trafficking doesn't affect us, it does.

The misconceptions are many. One might think that the majority of human trafficking victims are foreign-born, imported for this form of modern slavery, but in reality, at least 97% of victims are Canadian-born. This province is home to the largest number of domestic human trafficking cases, where victims are born and raised right here in Ontario. One might think that the victims are forcibly plucked off the street by a shadowy, unknown man pulling the strings that control their life, but in reality, about 85% of victims were recruited through human contact, and 34% were in the sex trade and pimped by their boyfriend.

Young women are lured in through personal relationships, systemically isolated from family and friends, psychologically and physically abused by those they trusted and, in some cases, loved.

Victims are sexually exploited, earning their traffickers over \$280,000 per year for just one victim. Traffickers advertise the sexual services of their victims, some as young as 14, through online ads and social media. I've been told that on any given day, about 500 of those online sex ads are for victims of human trafficking.

To make progress in our fight against human trafficking, we need to make serious changes to the way in which we combat it. This means changing public perception of who is a victim of human trafficking, because, quite frankly, she is the girl next door. She's the pretty and popular girl who hopes no one ever finds out that deep down inside she doesn't feel pretty at all. She's the girl who never wants her parents to learn about the embarrassing pictures taken of her at a house party. She's the lonely girl who is often seen walking home alone from school.

I've heard stories of girls being targeted at the mall food court, the parking lot at their high school or a house party they attended with friends. This is in stark contrast to how many people perceive human trafficking and it shows that while at-risk individuals do face the greatest threat of being trafficked, human trafficking is a scourge that can affect anyone, no matter their background or socio-economic status.

Regardless of how these victims are brought into the system of human trafficking, victims are constantly in danger. Victims are manipulated by their trafficker and removed from their normal life to live and work in horrific conditions. They may also face fatal consequences if they attempt to escape.

The crime represents a consistent and pervasive assault on the fundamental human rights of its victims. A report entitled *The Incidence of Human Trafficking* in Ontario from the Alliance Against Modern Slavery lays out the vastness of the human trafficking problem in Ontario and steps that can be taken to fix it.



This organization does admirable work in combatting human trafficking worldwide and they, too, believe that a provincial task force is necessary. In its report, the alliance found that 96.5% of victims experience some form of violence and that over half of them were held captive for some period of time.

These shocking and horrifying statistics make it clear that there is no time to waste when it comes to taking action on human trafficking. There is an immediate need to change how we investigate and prosecute the criminals behind the human trafficking rings.

1400

The problem does not stop when these victims are found. This week in the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, we heard from two survivors of human trafficking who now work with NGOs to help others.

Cassandra Diamond from BridgeNorth spoke of the very unique needs when delivering services to victims. She explained, "When I'm working with women, I care about the recidivism rate. I don't want them going back. So there are two things that we have to concern ourselves with.... Housing is primary. Then it's like a tie for second: counselling and job opportunities. Because if you cannot make enough money to provide for yourself or your family, again, the vacuum just sucks you right back up and you're stuck."

We also heard from Katarina MacLeod, who spoke about the difference in victim service needs of those who have been exploited in the sex trade from those who have experienced sexual violence or harassment. "It's totally different," she said. "Abuse is abuse regardless of where it happens, how it happens, but when there's sexual exploitation, there's something that changes inside of you. There's a shift in the way you feel, in the way you think, how you think men are. Your body is being used and degraded over and over again. You're being raped every day for a service that is provided to men. So the long-term damage that is happening to these women is very crucial, and I, being one of them, am still suffering and will probably suffer the rest of my life."

We need to change how we interact with and help survivors. This is why I'm proposing the immediate implementation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking, in the same style as the provincial guns and gangs task force. This would improve province-wide coordination in fighting human trafficking. The guns and gangs unit includes police officers, crown prosecutors and victim assistance workers, who all collaborate from the first day of the investigation. Through this combination of expertise, the task force achieves the dual purpose of apprehending criminals and also assisting their victims. The guns and gangs task force has been successful, and the implementation of a similar structure regarding human trafficking is crucial.

Currently, jurisdictions are independently investigating trafficking crimes, but given these crimes' highly transient nature, the efforts of law enforcement are hindered by multiple investigations of the same perpetra-

tor of crimes in multiple areas. Under the proposed task force, investigation and prosecution would be coordinated between the different police services, making for easier and faster criminal proceedings and hopefully resulting in a prosecution rate higher than the 25% that it is currently. From survivors and experts, we know that victims are moved from community to community, particularly along Highway 401, which makes information-sharing between multiple jurisdictions crucial.

It would also help victims, as the current way in which human trafficking victims are assisted is extremely patchwork and not comprehensive. Groups such as Covenant House in Toronto are doing remarkable work in trying to help those victims who make the decision to break free of their captors. However, the overall quantity and effectiveness of services available to victims is well below what it should be. This is not because the advocates and social workers are not trying hard enough; rather, it is because the current system makes it extremely difficult for places like Covenant House not only to immediately help victims but also to keep them safe and away from the clutches of their abusers.

One aspect where a provincial task force would be immeasurable would be its ability to help facilitate the creation of safe houses solely for the purpose of sheltering human trafficking victims. Currently, no such facility exists. Victims end up at a variety of already-existing shelters, but these are not specifically suited for them. Whether it is due to the focus of the shelter or certain restrictions on entrance, like age, victims of human trafficking often end up back in the clutches of their abusers after only a few days in a shelter.

Recognizing this problem, Interval House, a centre for abused women and children, tried to set up a human-trafficking-specific safe house in Ottawa. However, they were unable to obtain provincial funding necessary to be able to complete the project.

Mr. Speaker, this is a tragedy, but luckily one that can be rectified. Safe houses specifically for human trafficking victims are a necessity because these victims' needs are different from the needs of victims of other crimes. Particularly, they urgently require one-on-one companionship with support staff and access to a trauma counsellor.

The Alliance Against Modern Slavery report notes that the first 72 hours with a trafficking victim are crucial. If they are not helped within this time period, they are significantly more likely to fall back into the life they were so desperately trying to escape.

Additionally, trafficking victims often require longer-term assistance than is provided in the current facilities that are available to them. They are usually pushed out after a specific time when they are deemed to be able to reintegrate, as opposed to a more flexible schedule based around the individual healing and recovery process.

There is a need to train police, prosecutors and particularly judges on the unique nature of human trafficking, especially how these victims recall and recount memories. Probation officers need training to identify

victims, as many of these young women find themselves in the judicial system. Nurses and doctors need training to identify victims, as many may be brought into the ER or treated for sexually transmitted diseases, injuries, or pregnancies. Lastly, municipal employees need training to identify victims, when many apply for an exotic dancing licence so that they are able to work in local bars.

I'm reminded again of testimony from Casandra Diamond of BridgeNorth, who spoke to the select committee this week. She said, and I quote, "Violence against women and inequality are amplified when licensed. Each and every prostituted person, every day, would be able to make a claim under WSIB had they had been in any other industry."

I believe that we can—we must—attack this problem head-on, which is why I propose this private member's motion. We cannot wait any longer to take action.

Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I am pleased to rise as MPP for London West and also as the women's issues critic for the NDP caucus to speak to the motion from the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. As she pointed out, human trafficking is very much a women's issue. We know that about two thirds of those who are trafficked are women and girls, and in virtually all cases of trafficking for the purposes of sex exploitation, the victims are women.

Women are more vulnerable to trafficking because they are more likely to be poor. Poverty is one of the clearest risk factors for trafficking, and that's particularly the case for immigrant or First Nations women. Another risk factor is low education. We know the kinds of barriers that First Nations people faced in accessing education or employment and the legacy of residential schools that continues to create barriers to First Nations women.

But, of course, human trafficking does not only affect women; it also affects those who are children. About half of victims of trafficking are under 18 years of age. As the member said, the more high-profile cases involve people from other countries who are trafficked and brought to Canada to work as migrant workers on farms or construction sites, their papers and passports confiscated—forced to work without pay and without adequate food.

New Democrats will be supporting the motion. We certainly agree that a task force would be a good idea. The little research that has been conducted on this issue suggests that Ontario is actually where the majority of victims of both foreign and domestic human trafficking live.

There is clearly a need for much greater federal-provincial coordination on this issue. Other provinces—British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba—have all moved ahead to create formal task forces such as the one that is proposed, but Ontario has no formal anti-trafficking program in place, no system to deal with this issue.

But we also want to emphasize that, more than just combatting human trafficking, which is what this motion

calls on the government to do, what we need in this province is a system of supports to assist victims of trafficking. We need training and services for front-line agencies that are dealing with victims of trafficking, and for law enforcement officials. We also need to address root causes: poverty and lack of opportunity, as I mentioned.

**1410**

We know that in February 2011, the Ontario government announced just less than \$2 million over three years to combat human trafficking, but in Manitoba, where they have about one thirteenth the population of Ontario, there has been a commitment of \$10 million a year to fund anti-trafficking programs.

I want to close with a quote from the research report that was completed in June of last year called *The Incidence of Human Trafficking in Ontario*. That report says, "Human trafficking victims in Ontario report inappropriate and inadequate services, along with frustration of lack of coordination and consistency in services provided. This frustration is echoed by dedicated law enforcement officers, service providers and NGOs who face barriers in providing and obtaining services for victims."

We know that a policing and enforcement response is important, but you can't fight human trafficking without providing supports for the victims. You can't only target the traffickers; you have to look after the victims, you have to invest in front-line services, and you have to address root causes.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** As the minister responsible for women's issues in Ontario, I'm very pleased to rise today to speak on this motion related to human trafficking. I want to use my time to speak a bit about what investments have been made in Ontario and some of the initiatives we're currently working on.

Let me first say that we know what a devastating crime human trafficking is, and that women and girls are particularly vulnerable. Human trafficking for sexual and labour exploitation affects vulnerable people right across Canada. It's a complicated issue that requires collaboration with community organizations, between ministries, police forces and international partners, which is why we did not wait for this motion today to take action on this issue. We have been front and centre in fighting against human trafficking.

The Ontario Women's Directorate and other government partners have been investing in programs aimed to prevent human trafficking, to improve law enforcement and the prosecution of offenders, and to ensure that victims receive the support they need. For example, an additional investment of \$1 million to the Language Interpreter Services program was provided annually to expand services to victims of sexual violence, including human trafficking, to help them access health care, legal and social services they need, in more than 70 languages in various local communities.



Last year, we provided \$225,000 in funding to the White Ribbon Campaign to help it develop and promote resources that engage young men in ending human trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation of women and girls.

The Ministry of the Attorney General also provided support for the development of a comprehensive, province-wide online training program for front-line workers. The program became available to service providers at the end of January 2014.

We are also working with our federal partners to support the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking.

A couple of things I just want to touch on that relate to the supports and services from community safety and correctional services: Since 2003, that ministry has provided funding to 11 projects, for a total of approximately \$1.4 million under Ontario's Proceeds of Crime Front Line Policing Grant Program, to help police services combat human trafficking in Ontario. These funds helped police with special investigations into this trade, created education campaigns for potential victims and witnesses, provided for increased surveillance and improved officer training, and supported human trafficking investigators.

The OPP also worked closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency on several border enforcement teams that take a coordinated approach to organized crime, including human trafficking.

In Ontario, we have launched a very coordinated approach to combat human trafficking and raise awareness of this very serious issue. There are a number of initiatives focused on prevention, enforcement and support for victims that the OPP, Peel region and Toronto police have provided. There are financial supports for projects driven by local police services to fight human trafficking in communities.

There's information, support and referral services available 24/7 in 150 languages; and additional supports to emergency services and community agencies to better assist victims of human trafficking.

There are new specialized human trafficking crown attorneys to help build strong cases and prosecute offenders.

And there's been an awareness campaign to help victims.

Ontario has established a human trafficking advisory committee as well, made up of police service reps, victim service providers, experts and survivors to provide advice on priorities and community needs.

Our government will continue to work with our partners to combat this very serious issue.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** I'm pleased to rise in support of my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

I just listened to the Liberal minister and, with the greatest of respect, this is not about, "We've already done

stuff. This is our issue." This is about trying to help young people who are in very, very nasty situations.

I really have to say thank you to a couple of friends of mine in my community, one crown attorney and a couple of OPP police officers who are on the front line dealing with this human trafficking issue. While it is lovely to talk about what has happened, what the intention is or that another advisory committee has happened, these are young people who need help right now. The people on the front line, the people who have spoken to my colleague, to d myself, who have presented at the select committee, say that a provincial task force is what is needed.

If you want to have some reading that's going to keep you up at night, start with Somebody's Daughter. It's Julian Sher who wrote it. As a mother of a young teenager, it scares me like nothing else. These are people, as Laurie—sorry. As my colleague said, these are our neighbours. These are our children. These are 97% Canadian-born kids who need help today, right now.

The police officers who have talked to us about human trafficking say that one of the things these human traffickers do is, they swap girls. They swap them from community to community, so that as soon as the OPP in Dufferin county starts to figure out there's an issue, they take them and move them to Chatham. Then they stay in Chatham for a couple of days, and if it gets hot, they go to London. So there's no ability for those local police officers who actually have a lot of front-line experience on this to actually get the job done, because the girls are being swapped. It's a terrible, terrible story, and what we are hearing is, "The provincial task force will assist." They've seen it succeed with the guns and gangs, and they know and they believe that it will help with human trafficking.

So if we can do one thing this afternoon, let's not get into this "We're a Tory and we believe this," and "We're Liberal and we've already done this, so let's move on." Let's actually do something that will proactively help our children, help our neighbours, and get moving on this provincial task force.

While my colleague was speaking, I was very quickly going through all of the ministries that this scourge impacts, and it's substantial: community safety and corrections—obvious; Attorney General—obvious; education; colleges and universities.

One of the things they do is, they recruit off our college and university campuses the shy girl, the girl who takes a little longer to find friends. They're going on to our college campuses and recruiting those young ladies.

Municipal affairs and housing—Laurie spoke about the need for unique housing; government and consumer services; children and youth; health; community and social services; aboriginal affairs; women's directorate.

Law enforcement obviously plays a big role. Our crown attorneys, who have to become experts in this seedy world where we actually think that a young girl is a commodity that can be swapped and traded. How despicable is that?

1420

Finally, when you actually have the ability to pull some of these young ladies back: PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. The young lady who appeared at the select committee this week had been out for something like three or four years. She's going to therapy now.

We can do something collectively, as parliamentarians, if we move forward and say, "Yes, we believe that the model that is already out there, which relates to the guns and gangs task force, can actually work with human trafficking."

Please set aside your stripes for a few hours this afternoon and move forward on this provincial task force. And if you really need to have some sleepless nights, read Somebody's Daughter.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I want to commend the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for bringing forward this motion. There has been a lot of growing awareness of human trafficking at the federal level and at the provincial level. I want to commend her for actually developing this motion so that it focuses on the coordination of services. That's the missing piece right now in the province of Ontario.

It's true, as the minister says, that there are little bits and pieces of money all over, and they're announced in very public-relations-like ways. But actually, victim services is still waiting for some funding from the Attorney General from 2012. It's a consistent issue that victim services continually brings to this Legislature.

There is also a mention of what's happening at the federal level, and I think it's safe to say that this motion is stronger than what is happening at the federal level—that's very much focused on a policing perspective. The issue of human trafficking is so complex that you just don't want to pick it up downstream when it gets to the police. The best solution is through education and through supporting people who have actually been through this cycle.

Kitchener-Waterloo is a thriving economic community. Waterloo was voted one of the most intelligent communities in Ontario and Canada, and human trafficking is happening in our communities, right under our noses. What adds insult to injury for a lot of people, I think, is that when it is that girl next door, as other members have mentioned, when they actually have the courage to come forward and finally tell their story about being exploited, about being manipulated, about being used and exposed to a kind of violence that none of us would even like to think about—when they do come forward, the services are not there to help them through that process. In fact, they are re-victimized because of shame. There is absolutely so much more that we can be doing.

It's hard for me not to think about a healing circle that I attended in Kitchener, where a First Nations woman told her story about how she was literally lured into this circle by attention, by gifts, by promises of perhaps going

to school—of education. She was completely and utterly manipulated, and then came the drugs and addiction, and the need to stay in that cycle of poverty and oppression and exploitation just to exist.

And when she was finally, through a huge support network, actually pulled back out, she was tempted again and again to fall back into that cycle because there were no supports to hold her in place. The safe houses are absolutely a key part of that. These women live on the margins of society, and they live next door to us. What needs to happen is greater coordination of services.

I also want to make mention of the special task force that is dealing with the sexual exploitation around human trafficking. These officers see things that no one should ever have to bear witness to, especially when it's children.

I want to commend the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. This motion is needed. The coordination of services is needed; more leadership on this issue is needed. We can do this today, and I hope that this motion earns the full support of this House today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** I welcome the opportunity to speak to this motion today, and I thank the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for her passionate words and for introducing it so eloquently.

Human trafficking is a grave violation of basic human rights. Every country in the world, including Canada, is affected by trafficking, whether as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims. In fact, trafficking does not necessarily involve any movement from one place to another. Traffickers reap large benefits and profits while robbing victims of their freedom and their dignity.

Trafficking victims are some of the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals in our society—held against their will; deprived of their dignity and their identity documents; forced to work or provide services ranging from forced labour to commercial sexual exploitation to organ trading to forced servile marriages.

Victims are subject to sexual abuse, threats, intimidation, physical violence and isolation, and for victims who find themselves in such situations, escape can be very difficult and dangerous. Furthermore, those who do escape face tremendous challenges in reintegration, due to stigmatization and intolerance, and many of them may already have fallen afoul of the criminal justice system.

Unfortunately, organized crime and its deep underground human trafficking networks are difficult to detect and investigate. This is why it's so important to provide our protection agencies with the extra resources and training they need to combat human trafficking.

Since 2003, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has provided funding to 11 projects of a total of approximately \$1.4 million under the proceeds-of-crime front-line policing grant. These funds helped with special investigations, educational campaigns for potential victims and witnesses, and improved training for investigators.



A province-wide human trafficking network has also been established to facilitate information-sharing between police forces. Similarly, the Ontario Provincial Police are working closely with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency on coordinating approaches to human trafficking. To help build strong prosecution cases, Ontario has also established new specialized human trafficking crown attorneys.

Due to the dreadful accumulated trauma that trafficking victims have experienced, agency support and assistance are essential to help those affected to recover and piece their lives back together. The Ontario government is proud to support our community partners in this respect. The government has also established a human trafficking advisory committee to help inform the province's approach to human trafficking.

With the excitement continuing to build to the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games—in only two months' time—we are aware of the increased potential for human trafficking at that time. I was pleased to hear that Ontario's human trafficking committee is working with the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games joint intelligence group to share information to mitigate trafficking during this event.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the work of our police forces on this issue and share with you and the members of this House a success story. Last year, the Durham Regional Police Service and the OPP coordinated two successful operations to raise awareness and reach out to those exploited in the sex trade. The second operation, in October 2014, resulted in the arrest of nine traffickers and the rescue of 18 victims, one as young as 12. In addition to the 33 charges that were laid, dozens of ongoing investigations derived from the intelligence that they gathered.

These are only a few of the actions that Ontario has taken to address this grave human rights violation taking place right here in our country.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to lend my support to this motion, and I want to thank the member from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock once again for bringing it forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** It is a great pleasure of mine to have an opportunity to speak to this timely motion calling for province-wide approaches to the disturbing realities and impacts of human trafficking.

As we've heard, the dire impacts of human trafficking worldwide—and right here in Ontario—are far-reaching, exceedingly hurtful, and as real as they are hidden.

1430

We as legislators have a responsibility to ensure the safety of people in Ontario and, given the impact, I think it's vital that we live up to that responsibility when it comes to addressing human trafficking right here in our province.

Certainly, there are many good organizations that work diligently to shine a light on the despicable prac-

tices occurring every day within our province, and many working to help the victims, whose deep scars may never heal.

In my area, the Waterloo Region Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition has been struck between 11 different organizations, to develop partnerships and protocols to identify and assist people who have been trafficked for the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, forced labour and forced marriage in the region of Waterloo.

The coalition links people who have been trafficked to appropriate services and supports, and works to increase knowledge and awareness of the issue of human trafficking in Waterloo region.

The coalition is made up of representatives—and I want to highlight these groups, because they are extremely important—providing services in my community: Family and Children's Services of the Waterloo Region; the Highland-Stirling Community Group; the House of Friendship; the Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre; the Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre; the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre; the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region; Victim Services of Waterloo Region; Walk With Me; the YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo; and, of course, the Waterloo Regional Police Service.

In the words of our Waterloo regional police chief, Bryan Larkin, "The exploitation of women in our region is occurring daily. It is comforting to know community members are engaged and leading the charge for awareness and support alongside the Waterloo Regional Police Service." Just this past winter, Chief Larkin and Waterloo Regional Police Service joined forces with Walk With Me to collect new pyjamas for victims of human trafficking.

This follows work by the Waterloo Regional Police Service in partnership with the Kitchener detachment of the RCMP last year, in a national enforcement initiative to address the criminal elements forcing young women into the sex trade. Operation Northern Spotlight was a co-operative effort involving 26 police services in over 30 communities across Canada. As part of the local investigation, police located an 18-year-old female victim from Toronto who was allegedly exploited and forced to work as an escort in the region. Two males from Toronto were subsequently arrested in Kitchener.

It's thanks to the attention and the understanding of the men and women in our local police services that authorities are able to apprehend some of the perpetrators in these despicable crimes. But more must be done to help them address these situations before young people in our communities are victimized in the first place.

And so the work continues, to raise awareness and help victims. The Waterloo Regional Police Service also recently threw its support behind a fundraising initiative launched in February by a local victim of human trafficking. Timea Nagy, founder of Timea's Cause, raised funds to increase awareness among 1,250 police officers and social service workers, to provide them with the training to help victims escape sex trafficking. She started Walk

With Me in Hamilton in 2009, to help victims, and has trained 10,000 officers and social service providers across the country.

I'm proud today to voice my support for the motion brought forward by my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock and look forward to seeing the rest of this House do the same, for a timely creation of a provincial task force to combat human trafficking in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to add a few words to this deeply troubling debate.

La traite des personnes désigne, entre autres, « le recrutement, le transport, le transfert, l'hébergement ou l'accueil de personnes, par la menace de recours ou le recours à la force ou à d'autres formes de contrainte, par enlèvement, fraude, tromperie, abus d'autorité ou d'une situation de vulnérabilité, ou par l'offre ou l'acceptation de paiements ou d'avantages pour obtenir le consentement d'une personne ayant autorité sur une autre aux fins d'exploitation. L'exploitation comprend, au minimum, l'exploitation de la prostitution d'autrui ou d'autres formes d'exploitation sexuelle, le travail ou les services forcés, l'esclavage ou les pratiques analogues à l'esclavage, la servitude ou le prélèvement d'organes. »

I was participating in an international forum on this topic, and I was shocked when the statistics for Canada were presented. I thought that this is something that happened elsewhere; this is not something that happens in Ontario or in Canada. No, no, this is something that happens in Third World countries—not at all, Speaker, not at all.

The RCMP presented the statistics in black and white, and it is enough to make you cry. Did you know that right here, right now, in Ontario we can expect that there are at least 240 women who are being sexually exploited and who need our protection? Did you know that right here, right now, in Ontario there are at least 320 people, mainly women, being exploited to work in private people's homes? They are only the tip of the iceberg. Those are the statistics that the RCMP could give us, but they were really clear that the situation is way worse than what they were able to present, because what they were able to present was people they have been able to identify, but of course a lot of what goes on—nobody even knows those people are even there.

They went on to say that people who come from other countries will transit through Ontario to find their way to the States. This human trafficking route mainly takes the route of Ontario or British Columbia, and the numbers are staggering. We're talking 2,200 people going through Ontario and British Columbia through the human trafficking trade. None of this I knew even existed.

When I was presented with this, we saw what other countries internationally are doing and, let me tell you, Speaker, they are doing a whole lot more than we are doing here in Ontario. Some of it could be basically copied as to what they've done in France and Belgium, in

some of the other western countries of Europe, and brought here if only we had this task force to start to talk about it, to have an open dialogue. I have no problem patting ourselves on the back for the little steps we have taken, but there is so much more we can do. We should do this for those 240 women who are presently being used as sexual slaves, and we should do this for the 320 mostly women and children who are being abused as domestics.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to private member's motion number 48. I want to thank the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock for speaking so eloquently earlier.

There's no question that human trafficking is an issue that our government takes extremely seriously and I know that the members on this side definitely take seriously. This is a disturbing, horrible crime that robs its victims, who are mostly women and young children, of their most basic human rights and freedoms. They are forced into labour or sexual services, often through coercive practices like intimidation, force, sexual assault and threats of violence to themselves or their families. Those who are socially or economically disadvantaged—aboriginal women, youth, children, new immigrants, teenage runaways—are at greater risk of becoming victims.

Between 2011 and 2013, there were 551 reported cases of human trafficking that were at least in some way linked to Ontario. Of course, this doesn't take into account the unreported crimes. And contrary to popular belief, it's not just international citizens who are targeted as victims. In 2010, a study estimated that 71% of all cases of human trafficking in Canada involved domestic sex trafficking. That same study found that 63% of victims of trafficking cases in the province of Ontario were Canadian citizens. Imagine that, Mr. Speaker. For so many of us here in the House—parents, grandparents—the thought of someone from our families or friends or neighbours being taken and forced into what basically amounts to modern-day slavery is horrifying. These victims are being beaten, emotionally abused, and live in constant fear. They need help, and we have a duty to help these victims.

But I am pleased to say that our government has not been blind to these deeply troubling and significant issues. Ontario has been and continues to be front and centre in the fight against human trafficking, but we recognize that there is more work to do.

**1440**

Since 2003, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has provided funding to 11 projects. There has also been the establishment of a human trafficking advisory committee, and we are working with the human trafficking committee with the Pan/Parapan Am Games jointly.

I'm sure that we can all agree that these are despicable crimes and that perpetrators must be pursued and brought



to justice. It's something we must work on together. I support this motion from the member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. It is imperative that we deal with this immediately.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm very happy to rise today to support my colleague from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock on her private member's motion which is seeking to create a provincial task force to combat human trafficking, which, as we're hearing today, is definitely a scourge here in Ontario.

I'm sure a lot of people here, now that the nice weather is here—you go for a walk, and you hear a little noise, and you look over, and there's a racoon digging around in somebody's garbage, and you're reminded of the thousands of raccoons and rats living right under our beautiful city. That's kind of what's going on with human trafficking. It's an invisible epidemic.

I want to just quote from a study. The author of the study said, "Child sexual exploitation is the most hidden form of child abuse in the U.S. and North America today."

I want to remind everybody that human trafficking often involves children. It involves young girls. It can involve boys, as well, but it is predominantly women who are subjected to it. These are lives ruined—not just the girls themselves, but their entire families are forever shaken up.

As awful as it is for any of us to imagine losing a child, in a way this is worse, because there's no closure. You know that your child is always out there somewhere suffering, because even if you can get them off the streets, it's hard to get them rehabilitated and get them the help they need.

I've been given some information from Peter Casey. He's a detective sergeant with York Regional Police. What he has explained to me is that York Regional Police has created a vice team to combat human trafficking, and they've been very successful. They went from a unit enforcing and charging sex trade workers to a unit that recognizes that the vast majority of women and girls involved in the sex trade are victims—so to help them, not be treating them as the criminals. The criminals are the johns and the pimps. This York Regional Police vice team did not charge a single female with solicitation over that seven-year period. So they completely changed the way that they're operating. They're taking this new approach, working with all kinds of community organizations and trying to train others, and they definitely want to see a provincial task force similar to the guns and gangs task force, which we all know was so successful.

I think that there should be support here in the Legislature. Why? Because I think that there's support at home. The people who put us here want us to do better in terms of combatting human trafficking. They're upset when it's their daughter who has gone missing and they hear that girls can be moved around from town to town and hotel to hotel, and the police put up their arms and say, "We have no jurisdiction to go in over there."

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge everybody here to do better, to create that task force. Let's stop talking and get working.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I want to thank the members of the Legislature who spoke in favour. It's a frightening issue that's occurring out there. It terrified me when I first delved into it.

I want to thank the many, many police officers I spoke to and thank them for their dedication in working on this. It's very difficult to work in this field to help these victims. The great organizations that came forward and told their stories—and there are many more I need to hear. And the survivors who came forward, either if they just spoke to me personally or they actually came to committee and told their stories—I think that was incredibly impactful on all of us.

To know that it's the girl next door—97% are Canadian-born, I think—was the most shocking statistic that I had heard in our research.

The minister spoke of the monies invested. It's many-ministry facilitated and we need to coordinate. That's the issue that I'm bringing forward: replicating the guns and gangs task force. We need a coordinated effort.

I think, from what I heard today and the people that I have spoken to, there's an absolute willingness. It's imperative that we do something to combat human trafficking. It's going to help the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the trafficking victims and allow the police to more effectively prosecute these criminals who perpetrate these despicable crimes. As you've noticed, it's an issue I feel quite strongly about, and it does need immediate attention. We don't know who the next victim is going to be. We don't know where they'll come from.

I call on all my fellow members to support this motion—I appreciate what I've heard so far—to make this task force a reality and put an end to human trafficking in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Transportation should amend the funded projects identified by the province's southern highways program for 2015-19 to include the expansion and widening of the Essex-to-Leamington section of Highway 3, Bruce Crozier Way, in keeping with the identified safety, economic development and infrastructure priorities of the region.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** As always, it is an honour to rise in this House to speak on behalf of my riding and my constituents, perhaps particularly more so today on such

an important infrastructure project with such importance to my riding.

This is titled “Prioritize the expansion of the Bruce Crozier Way.” It simply is that simple. It’s about prioritizing this last phase, the third phase of Highway 3. It is also a promise that I made to my community during the last election to fight for the completion of this phase of the highway. I’m happy to use my first private member’s slot since the election to do so. It’s something that I want to see, that our community wants to see: for this government to finish what they started.

The stretch from Leamington to Windsor on Highway 3 is about a 50-kilometre stretch. Historically, it was a two-lane highway, and my predecessor, Bruce Crozier, a man who held the seat for 17 years, saw fit to fight and to lobby the government—as a member of the government—to widen that highway. He garnered large support from community members, stakeholders, businesses and municipalities for that endeavour and he was successful. He committed a large portion of his career to ensuring that that link, that vital thoroughway, was completed. It was aptly named for him, unfortunately, after he’d retired and after he’d passed.

However, it’s come to the attention of myself and to our community that the plan has changed. In 2006, the government had approved this project. It promised that it would be completed by 2014-15. But now we’re seeing that the government is potentially poised to delay the project and potentially by a generation. We know that the greenhouse industry in Leamington, Kingsville and southwestern Ontario; the winery industry—we have dozens of world-class wineries that are in operation. And the tourism industry—Pelee Island and the Erie coast peninsula is really a wonderful, burgeoning tourism destination and something that requires connectivity and something that requires good infrastructure. This is vital to our region. It’s an integral component to our growth. If there was ever an area in Ontario that we know requires economic generation and stimulus, it is southwestern Ontario. Windsor and Essex county have, unfortunately, the highest unemployment rate in the province. That’s not a distinction that we like, but despite our efforts to do the right thing and to attract those jobs, we’re not feeling as though we have a partner, especially when it comes to the infrastructure needs of this highway.

The EA, the environmental assessment, was performed in 2006 and was granted for this project. The Highway 3 expansion was split into three phases. Phase 1 and phase 2 are completed, and they are wonderful. They’re double-laned and they provide smooth transit for commuters who are coming into Windsor.

1450

They also link up to what we all know now, today, is being named the Gordie Howe International Bridge. Now, we can argue whether that’s appropriately named, the new bridge that will cross from Windsor into Detroit; however, that Highway 3 link connects to the Herb Gray Parkway, which then will connect to the Gordie Howe bridge. It’s going to allow us to grow and to blossom; no

pun intended in reference to our greenhouse industry. But they desperately need this connectivity, and when you get to the point where phase 2 has ended, you find a massive bottleneck. It’s an 80-kilometre highway, and people hit that 80 kilometres at 110, as we typically drive on 80-kilometre highways. So we need that widening, not only for connectivity and for our economic growth needs, but there are incredible safety implications that demand that we do this, and do this now.

Speaker, I introduced a petition signed by many members of our community two weeks ago, and unfortunately, three hours later a rollover accident claimed the lives of two people on that stretch of highway, the exact same stretch that I’m speaking of. It was a terrible example of why we need this, but all the more reason for the government to act swiftly to deliver what they promised.

I come from a region where we value the virtue of doing what you say you’re going to do. When you say you’re going to do something, do it, and if you can’t do it, come up with a good reason; tell us why you can’t do it. But if you are going to do something, stay true to your word. That certainly is what Bruce did. He fought and dedicated his life to doing that.

I don’t know if there are any members in here who sat with Bruce.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I did.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Yes. So you remember him. He was a consummate politician. He was an incredible gentleman, and despite our—

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** The bow tie.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Of course, he had the bow tie. We know the quintessential bow tie.

He taught me a lot. He taught me a lot about how to be a good politician. I learned from him. Although I never had the chance to let him know that, I really did. He was well respected across party lines. You don’t get elected for 17 years running without doing what you say you’re going to do.

When I took up the challenge, when I made the promise to my community to do that, I did so not only as their representative but as what I think Bruce would want me to do. If I started something as a member and wasn’t able to finish it, it would be my hope that the person that came next to me, despite their partisan affiliation, would actually endeavour to finish that work and would continue that work. Not—don’t do it for me, but do it because at least they know that I had the support of my community in trying to accomplish that.

This is one of the main impetuses for this bill, Speaker. It’s certainly something that we know is needed. It’s something that Bruce fought for from the beginning of his tenure in 1993, something that is widely supported by municipalities. There are letters of endorsement that I’ve sent to the minister from the county of Essex that support my motion. Mayor John Paterson in Essex and Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche expressed frustration at the recent announcement, asking why the plan doesn’t include the long-promised expansion of the road to four lanes.



Here's maybe a point that I didn't raise or I forgot to raise: The MTO has recently initiated a—they are going to resurface at the bottleneck portion. So we're going to have that phase 3 resurfaced, which gives us concern. Why would we resurface a road that is already planned to be doubled and widened? We will then be wasting money. You're going to lay down asphalt and, according to the plan, you'll have to rip it up by 2018 if you're going to fulfill your commitment under the southern highways plan. That's our concern: that by resurfacing, the signal is that we will lose this doubling of the last phase for a generation. We can't afford that. Our community can't afford it. Our small businesses can't afford it. Our tourism area can't afford it. And certainly the safety of commuters on that highway doesn't deserve it. We deserve what we were promised by this government, and that's what this motion is today. Fulfill your promise. Finish what Bruce started and deliver vital infrastructure to southwestern Ontario.

Speaker, the greenhouse industry in Leamington is at this very moment ready to invest half a billion dollars in our area, boosting the economy by something like \$580 million a year. But the greenhouse industry has said that expansion requires expanded infrastructure, particularly hydro, but also highway capacity.

Ms. Wynne challenged the agriculture industry to double its growth rate and create 120,000 jobs by 2020. Well, we need some help if we are going to do that in our agriculture heartland.

The mayor of Essex, Ron "Tout" McDermott—a shout-out to Tout—said, "The agriculture industry is going full bore now and we're getting things over [to] the States. There's a major need to expand out this way with the four-lane highway."

As I mentioned, the town of Essex passed a motion on May 4 in support of my call to widen this link.

I know that the government is under various forms of duress, whether it's teachers who are protesting or the need to find dollars anywhere. However, this is a promise that is not linked to the 2014 budget. It isn't linked to the 2011 budget or the 2008 budget. This is a promise that was made in 2006.

Today, when I asked the question of the Minister of Transportation, he seemed offended that I would even ask that we want you to finish the job. He seemed offended: "My goodness, why would you even ask the question?" It has been since 2006. How much more time do you need, Minister, to complete this for our region? How many more roads are out there that have not been completed or will not find the funding that is being promised or being touted by the government? That's our major concern.

In lobbying for this widening and seeking support, I reached out to Joan Crozier. Joan is Bruce's wife. I wanted to chat with her, as I always appreciate doing, just to get her sense and, really, to get her validation that I was on the right path. She certainly agreed that this was something that Bruce would want me to do and would want our community to have. I want to thank her for her acknowledgement and for her support on this.

I also want to thank all the members of our various municipalities who, for a long time, have pushed the government to give us an answer on whether this highway was going to be completed.

I've taken up 12 minutes of this debate. It shouldn't really take more than two minutes. Are you going to give us what you promised? Are you going to deliver and finish the job you started, or are you not? It is as simple as that.

If this government is so focused on infrastructure spending and they understand the need for infrastructure spending, then let's go back to some of your previous promises for communities that are still lagging behind in their connectivity and the need to advance and modernize their infrastructure. That would be us. That would be Essex county.

I would point to the fact that this has lingered for so long as being one of the measures of us having challenges throughout our economy. Allow us the opportunity to flourish. But you have to give us the appropriate tools. This is something that can easily be done. It is not a contentious issue, and it is well within the parameters and priorities and abilities of your government.

Today's motion simply does that. It calls on you to deliver what you promised—to finish what Bruce started. It also honours the legacy that Bruce had in our community by hopefully finishing what he started and honouring exactly his namesake, Bruce Crozier's Way. Indeed, if Bruce Crozier was to go after his own government, he would have done it. I'm proud to carry on that legacy and to fight for our community and see Highway 3 expanded.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I'd like to thank the member from Essex for bringing this motion forward, and draw attention to the importance of quality and safety on our roads and highways in the province of Ontario.

We certainly must pay attention to usage and safety on our highways. I also acknowledge that widening Highway 3 is a very important matter for not only the constituents of Essex but the surrounding areas. I commend him for working for the people of his riding.

As the member opposite knows, the Ministry of Transportation has prioritized Highway 3, which runs from Windsor to Leamington. In 2006, the ministry completed a transportation environmental study report, which focused on the widening of Highway 3.

Two phases of the widening are now complete, from the city of Windsor to the town of Essex. This government has invested almost \$50 million into this portion of the Highway 3 widening, and 13 kilometres have been covered.

We are currently working on the final phase of the Highway 3 widening. The recommendations and the environmental assessment from 2006 have to be updated, and this project is listed under the southern highways program.

1500

In the interim, the ministry has been working to improve portions of Highway 3 from Essex Road 27 to Essex Road 34. This improvement project will be carried out this summer and will include full-depth pavement reconstruction over 10 kilometres of the highway as well as drainage improvements, left-hand turn lanes and improved traffic signals. The ministry will also resurface over nine kilometres of Highway 3 from Essex Road 8 to Essex Road 27 this year.

These upgrades and improvements will improve the quality of the highway and ensure safe usage for years to come. I know the member opposite has been wondering about this as well, so I just want to reassure the member from Essex that these current reconstructions will continue to be utilized in the future because the upgraded portion of Highway 3 will soon become the westbound lanes of the expanded four-lane highway. We're not wasting that, Speaker; it will be used as other portions of the highway.

As I said, the update to the 2006 transportation environmental study report lies under the purview of the southern highways program, which will determine the best way forward in terms of future work to expand Highway 3.

We are also continuing with key expansion projects in the area, such as the Rt. Hon. Herb Grey Parkway. When I was there for a recent unveiling of the border services crossing building in Windsor, I was able to go on a tour of the Herb Grey Parkway. I know that it's opening this summer, and it's going to be an excellent piece of infrastructure for the people of Windsor.

Under the southern highways program, this government has been doing an excellent job of improving the quality of Ontario's highways and ensuring safe rides for Ontario's drivers and commuters. As a matter of fact, Speaker, we should be very proud that, thanks to government prioritizing, we Ontarians drive on some of the safest highways in North America. Commuters can be confident that the Ministry of Transportation is consistently working to improve the roads and reduce congestion in order to serve Ontario's driving population.

In the 2014-15 year, the Ontario government is committing around \$2 billion under the southern highways program to improve, expand and repair Ontario's highways and bridges. Among other projects, there will be lane widening, bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction projects for Highway 401, and seven bridge rehabilitations on Highway 403. These projects are expected to create and maintain 19,500 construction jobs in this province, both directly from the road work and indirectly stemming from related projects. The Ministry of Transportation will continue to provide an economic boost to all Ontarians.

It's interesting to note, Speaker, that the member of the third party has voted against the budgets that have contained the commitments to the investments in these important infrastructure projects, so I am encouraging him and all members of the third party to support the

budget investments for infrastructure that are contained within it.

For the reasons that I spoke to in my comments, the process to update the environmental assessment is under way, and this process cannot be bypassed. We need to do this expansion safely. We need a current, updated environmental assessment from the 2006 model. The first section has already been upgraded. Once the process is completed, this project will be completed in the next few years. I just encourage the member opposite to encourage his party to support the budget with the infrastructure investments contained within it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to rise today in support of the member for Essex's motion.

We share a riding border, and we share an interest in and passion for this issue. All this motion is asking is that the government honour a commitment that was made to the region in 2006. They promised that Highway 3 would be a four-lane highway from Windsor to Leamington and that it would be finished by this year. Of course, that promise has been broken.

Prior to the 2007 election, Liberals in southwestern Ontario campaigned on a promise to widen highways, most notably Highway 3 and the 401 between Ridgeway and Chatham, in my riding of Chatham-Kent-Essex—another promise broken.

It has been nearly a decade, and these highways have gotten even more dangerous. Sadly, Speaker, families have lost loved ones. Last year, a 13-year-old Windsor girl and her 35-year-old uncle were killed in a horrific crash on the 401 near Chatham. A tractor-trailer crossed into the oncoming traffic and struck their vehicle. In this area, there is no centre divider, just a small grass dip. Neglect of our highways has caused deaths that could have been prevented.

But this motion from my colleague from Essex is an effort to continue the good work done by the late Bruce Crozier, the former Liberal MPP who fought to have a portion of Highway 3 widened. The highway now bears his name as a lasting tribute: Bruce Crozier's Way.

Now, think about this, Speaker: Right now, we have a PC member standing in support of an NDP motion which is seeking to continue the work done by an effective Liberal MPP. This is a non-partisan issue. A good idea, no matter what it is—you know, a good idea doesn't care who owns it, doesn't care who champions it. As a matter of fact, this is a belief that Patrick Brown, the new leader of the PC Party, also shares.

That's why I was ashamed that the Minister of Transportation failed to address a direct question about Highway 3 this morning, and instead resorted to cheap partisan shots. He was asked why his government had broken its 2006 promise to Leamington and Essex. In his reply to a question about safety on a highway that saw tragic deaths just weeks ago, the Minister of Transportation somehow felt it was appropriate to go on the attack. He said, "It's a shame that they don't want to put our money where their mouths are."



Well, I'm sorry, Minister, but that money is not yours. Tax dollars belong to the people of Ontario, and they should serve the people of Ontario.

It's disappointing that that minister refuses to apologize or even accept blame on behalf of his government for deaths directly caused by their dangerous cutbacks on winter road maintenance, as an example. And now he has needlessly injected partisanship into a fair request to honour a past government commitment to widen roads for public safety.

But I know the government is capable of more. They can do better. They can honour the legacy of former MPP Bruce Crozier, who served in their government and fought hard to protect drivers along Highway 3. He would not accept the answer given this morning.

Mr. Speaker, we need to look at this objectively, with an eye for evidence, and the evidence is clear: Highway 3 is not safe. If you talk to people from my riding or from neighbouring ridings, they will tell you that not a day goes by without witnessing a close call along Highway 3.

A big part of the problem is that certain individuals feel the need to fly along this stretch of road as if it were a drag strip. A lot of times, people are travelling home from work in Windsor, and they want to get home as fast as possible. Many of my constituents prefer to take back roads, even though it adds to their travel time. That's how dangerous Highway 3 is at the moment.

Today, in order to pass a driver, you have to move into the oncoming traffic. This has had disastrous consequences and caused many fatal crashes. Widening the highway would allow slower drivers to move to the right lane, while faster drivers could pass safely in the fast lane.

As the PC critic for community safety, I stand in support of my colleague the NDP MPP from Essex. I stand in support of the motion calling on this government to honour its past promises, not only to the 401 between Ridgeway and Chatham, but more specifically, as it pertains to this motion, to the widening of Highway 3. It is a public safety issue, and every day the government delays action is another day where lives are put in jeopardy.

1510

I ask each and every member of this House to support this motion, as well. Their action, as opposed to their inaction, can in fact save lives along the Bruce Crozier parkway, located partly in Leamington and running through Essex county to Windsor.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm pleased to rise on my colleague's bill on Bruce Crozier's Way. Mr. Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak today on this motion being presented by my colleague from Essex.

Looking at the history of Highway 3, representatives have been trying to get this highway four-laned for two decades. I haven't been here for two decades. I'm looking at its history, and I'm seeing once again that promises were made to this community regarding

transportation and they haven't been delivered. I can certainly understand the frustration that comes with that. The people of my riding of Niagara Falls were told that getting the GO train from Niagara Falls to Toronto was a priority. They presented a very affordable and responsible business plan to the Minister of Transportation, and yet we're still waiting, even though we've been told it's a high, high priority.

When it comes to transit, people should never have to wait dozens of years to know if they're going to have proper access to highways. These kinds of questions play a big role in people's lives. Knowing that they'll be able to drive easily to work without having to wait hours in traffic is a fact that plays a big role when families get together and make decisions about where they want to move and settle down. It means a lot for communities, and they need to know that the commitments made to them are actually coming.

When we look at the case of Essex, the stretch of highway between Leamington and there—and quite a lot of economic development depends on promises actually coming true. There are jobs that depend on these commitments. There's money going into communities and people going to work. It's all part of knowing whether or not there will be reliable transportation. It's too important to commit to doing something and then not follow through once you're elected.

Mr. Speaker, those are all important issues, but there's one thing I'd like to focus on today. It's something that should always be our focus in this House, and that's road safety. Simply put, road safety comes second to none. Making sure that the people of this province never have to fear for their lives when they're driving on our roads is critical. This government should always be doing what it can to promote road safety.

I know that when it comes to Highway 3, petitions have been entered into this House before, calling on this government to complete the approved four-laning project that will keep the Windsor area safe.

Those of you who have been reading the Auditor General's report that came out a few short weeks ago know that road safety is a major concern. In case you missed it, the Auditor General proved that this government had been giving contracts to companies to clear our highways of snow and ice—the problem is, they awarded these contracts to the lowest bidders, companies that didn't even have the proper equipment or enough chemicals to remove the salt. It's easy to see what happened here: Roads became unsafe.

Mr. Speaker, I know you're interested in this. The companies that had been contracted to provide these services were told to report their own work—think about that—and let the ministry know if they thought they were meeting the standards. This is why it's important; this is why it ties into Windsor. In Niagara, the contractor that won the bid refused to even report the work they had done. To this day, we have no idea if they did their job or not. Do you know why? They never reported it. The government has never asked.

In Niagara, we knew our roads were unsafe. We contacted the MTO in the winter and they assured us that everything was fine. Our office was told, "Safety is our top priority at this ministry." They also said, "The ministry continuously monitors the contractor's compliance in meeting winter maintenance standards and ensures highways are safe for winter travel."

Well, the Auditor General's report shows clearly that this wasn't the case in Niagara and across the province of Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, I hope you can see what I'm trying to illustrate here and why it relates to the motion. The people in this province knew their roads were unsafe in the winter. We proved that with the winter roads report we launched when we were receiving complaints from across the province. This government received warnings over and over and over again that winter roads were not being cleared properly. In my office, we inquired directly to the minister regarding a stretch of the QEW between Sodom Road and Lyons Creek Road in Fort Erie. We were told that the government was properly monitoring this. We know this wasn't the case. We saw dozens and dozens of accidents in my riding that could have been prevented if this government had listened to the community.

This government knew they were receiving complaints about unsafe roads. They knew those receiving these contracts could not properly clear our roads. In fact, their own ministry officials told them that. Your own ministry officials told you that. So if this government knew our roads were unsafe, they had an obligation—as the government, you had an obligation—to fix this problem to protect the people of the province of Ontario.

I'm going to tell you a quick story because I think my time is just about up.

My mind goes to a GM employee driving to work on the QEW in my riding who lost control of his vehicle, crossed the highway—if anyone's been in Niagara, the highway goes like this, side by side—on a slippery road. Do you know what happened there? It took his life. I believe, and the community believes, that if we made sure our roads were safe, that accident would never have happened.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for my time. I fully support the motion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Thank you for the opportunity to address this private members' bill. I think it's a very important bill. It's very important when any member of this House, whether they be third party, opposition, or government, stands up to advocate on something that they believe to be very, very important in their community. For that alone, I think that's a very good thing.

I remember back to my days in municipal government when one of the hottest topics, especially around budget time, was about reconstruction of city roads. If you wanted to get a group of citizens into your budget meeting who were hot under the collar, it was to change

priorities to discover that another road in another part of the town was, in fact, in far worse shape than you had anticipated and that your plans, whatever they may have been, to construct a new road or reconstruct an existing road would have to be bumped back in order to accommodate higher-priority roads. I know that sometimes is hard to swallow but, in municipal life and in provincial life, that is the way things are.

I just wanted to touch on a couple of things to carry on. In the 2014-15 budget, we committed to spending almost \$2 billion to expand and repair southern Ontario highways and bridges. It's estimated that that \$1.95 billion of investments will create 19,500 jobs in southern Ontario. This is part of the southern highways program.

**1520**

I'm proud to say this: Ontario roads are among the safest in North America. In fact, I've read that in the previous years we were either number one or number two for having the safest roads in North America. I think that demonstrates the commitment that the workers—our staff, our employees—place on making sure that our roads are among the best and among the safest.

I know that the government has been investing to keep Ontario's highways and bridges in good repair to reduce congestion, improve safety and promote the economy. The Highway 404 extension north of my riding was on the books for years and years and years. Finally, after probably about 20 years, it was opened this year. It's a good thing because it's taking about 20,000 cars off the road each day. But it took a long time for it to be built, primarily because there were other priorities where roads and bridges were crumbling and in great need of repair. We're also continuing with key expansion projects such as the Rt. Hon. Herb Gray Parkway and Highway 407 East.

As I said, our government is focusing resources where they're needed the most: the rehabilitation of Ontario's pavement and bridges. When I did a little research about this particular road, it seems to me that it has not been forgotten. It is on the books, and currently the government is undertaking a study to update the 2006 design recommendations. So it has not been forgotten, in my books.

The ministry is investing nearly an additional \$50 million to widen 13 kilometres of Highway 3; that's phase 1 and 2. The one that leapt out at me, when I was reading through some of the literature, was that work to widen the remaining two-lane section of Highway 3 between Leamington and Windsor is still listed in the southern highways program under planning for the future. In the meantime, the government is reconstructing Highway 3 and those reconstructed lanes won't be torn up. It's not a waste of money. Those reconstructed lanes will become the future westbound lanes of the four-lane highway. That's where I'll leave it for now.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ted Arnett:** This is an important debate that the member for Essex has initiated this afternoon. What he's



asking for—obviously it's a priority in his riding of Essex—is that the widening of Bruce Crozier's Way, Highway 3, be undertaken between Essex and Leamington, and that this project be placed on the southern highways program, the Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan. He has talked about the history of this issue and the fact that apparently a campaign promise was made by the government in 2006 to finish this work by 2014-15 and it's still not done.

I have an opportunity occasionally to visit the Windsor and Essex area, and to drive the roads, of course. I am very well acquainted. In fact, the former member for Essex, Bruce Crozier, was a very good friend of mine because we served together as presiding officers, and I came to know he and Joan very well. I was very, very pleased when it was decided that Highway 3 would be named to remember and honour Bruce Crozier. It was very fitting and appropriate that that was done.

I certainly want to, again, comment about what a great man Bruce Crozier was and what an outstanding member of provincial Parliament. It would be inappropriate for me to purport to know what he would say on this issue, but I certainly know of his commitment to his constituency. He was certainly willing to speak up on behalf of his riding, if need be, challenging the powers that be in his own party. Obviously, he was that sort of a member and in that way he was an example, I think, to all members. The member for Essex is certainly bringing forward an idea that needs to be brought forward.

Coincidentally, I actually have a private member's resolution that is before the House too, as future business. It was actually the very first one on the order paper that was tabled on July 3, 2014, the very first day it was possible to table a private member's resolution. I think we had the throne speech that day, if I'm not mistaken. I call upon the government to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project on the southern highways program, the ministry's five-year investment plan for new highway construction in southern Ontario.

Obviously, I want to support the member for Essex in this regard. I'm not suggesting that I'm going to support his resolution and ask him to support mine, but clearly he's doing the same sort of thing I was trying to do, which is to bring this forward in the Legislature and encourage the government to give consideration, but also to highlight the importance of the project.

Now, we've heard from government members in the context of this debate that the government plans to spend \$2 billion on the southern highways program. That's a big number; there's no question. But, of course, it leads us, as opposition members, to say, "Okay, where are our projects in that \$2 billion?" I think it's a legitimate question.

The government obviously has all kinds of various projects before it, but we, as opposition members, have an obligation to bring forward these particular projects and try to raise awareness about the need, and try to get the government to listen, pay attention and hopefully respond.

The very day after the election, June 13 last year, I went to work in my riding office. The first thing I did was write a letter to the Premier, and I said this to her: "As you know from your tenure as Minister of Transportation, Highway 6 serves as a vital link between the 401 and the Hamilton/Niagara region and the US border. However, drivers travelling this route encounter a severe bottleneck in the community of Morriston, in Puslinch township, just south of the 401. Oftentimes traffic is backed up for kilometres in both directions.

"By constructing the Highway 6 Morriston bypass, this bottleneck would be eliminated, and traffic and goods could flow back and forth from Hamilton to the 401 more" easily and "quickly and safely. There would also be a" huge "positive economic benefit for a large region of the province. There is huge economic cost related to the current congestion at Morriston.

"As you know, I've been raising this in the Legislature for many years.

"Working with the township of Puslinch and the county of Wellington, I have repeatedly written and spoken to successive Ministers of Transportation urging that the Highway 6 Morriston bypass project be placed on the Ministry of Transportation's southern highways program, MTO's five-year plan for new highway construction. I have also raised the issue many times in speeches in the Legislature."

In fact, we had an important meeting with the former Minister of the Environment, John Gerretsen, a few years ago, where we pushed him to ensure that the environmental assessment could be concluded on this project. That was part of the work we did some time ago, and I would draw to the minister's attention again that the Morriston bypass environmental assessment has been concluded. Obviously, it's been a few years now, but we've got to keep momentum going forward.

I continued my letter to the Premier in this way: "During the most recent provincial Parliament, after you became the Premier, I introduced a private member's resolution again calling on the Minister of Transportation to put the Highway 6 Morriston bypass on the ministry's five-year plan for highway construction. My resolution," even then, "was the very first item on the order paper, as I tabled it the same day as your government's throne speech on February 19, 2013.

"This project has been talked about for a generation. It is time for this project to proceed.

"Once more, I urge you to prioritize this project and ensure that it is placed on the Ministry of Transportation's five-year plan for highway construction."

Of course, we were called back into session in July, Mr. Speaker, as you know, right after the election. I again tabled this private member's resolution, and it is, indeed, the first item on the Legislature's order paper.

On October 6, a group had been formed, called the Morriston Bypass Coalition. They met with many ministry staff, including staff of the Premier, and made a number of recommendations.

I'm unfortunately running out of time.

I have asked the current Minister of Transportation to meet again with the township of Puslinch and the Morriston Bypass Coalition. I know there are a number of other members interested in this project, and I want to invite them to show their support as well. We're going to keep working on this too.

I congratulate the member for Essex for bringing his local issue forward, and it certainly has my support.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It is my pleasure to add my support to the member from Essex.

You see, Speaker, when I was in office 159, Bruce Crozier's office was just across the hall from me. For some reason, we both came in through the east door and sort of got there at the same time. Bruce was a gentleman in everything he did.

We would come in on Monday, and he would talk to me about the weather in his riding. He came from way south, and I came from up north. Of course, the weather was really different. He would talk to me about all the greenhouses that had started in his riding, and I was under four feet of snow and ice. But it didn't matter. It was pleasant to talk to him.

**1530**

He was one of those dedicated MPPs who cared for the people he represented. He would share stories with me. And certainly this road, Highway 3, is something that he was putting his career on the line for. This was something that he understood, that, above all, everybody in his riding that he represented needed to have this highway four-laned for what it would bring in economic growth and for the safety of the people he represented.

He was very eloquent. He did what he was told. He sat on committee. He paid his dues. He tried really, really hard to be a good MPP. And he was part of the Liberal Party. I would ask the members of the Liberal Party to honour one of your own. He is somebody who is deserving of honour. He was an honourable member of this House. He convinced your government that this highway needed to be done. You named it in his honour. Don't dishonour him now. Finish this 50 kilometres so that we can all be proud of the legacy that Bruce Crozier brought to his riding and to this province.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** Thank you to the member from Essex for his motion today. I, like the member from Essex, represent a riding that sits along the edges of a larger city. Like Essex lies between Windsor and Leamington, Durham sits on the eastern fringes of the greater Toronto area. We in Durham know very well the necessity of the highways that lead from the cities into our communities, ones that have to adapt to traffic that begins in urban areas and gradually becomes more rural.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I also know that the Minister of Transportation must consider the needs of everyone in our province, and I am sure that he has his priorities straight. Part of Highway 3 in Essex will be

reconstructed. The ministry has made a significant investment, with an accommodation for further expansion in the design. That I take as a positive sign for the spirit of the member's motion and a positive action on behalf of our government. We must be prudent when we are considering our infrastructure, and I know that as we are building Ontario up, we must look at our province as a whole: urban, rural and all.

In my riding of Durham, we have a lot of projects on the go and a lot of projects that, in my estimation, would have taken priority as well, such as the extension of GO train services to Bowmanville and Courtice, such as rural roads in places such as Scugog, and culverts in need of repair in places such as Uxbridge. All of these are projects that take priority in my riding, and I know the government will adopt and will do these projects as time permits and as finances allow us to do so.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I thank the member from Essex for bringing this issue forward, but I kind of have some bad news for him, if I relate this to a story in my riding of Welland. I can remember in 1999, just before a provincial election, standing on Canadian Tire property at the corner of the 406 and Main Street in Welland. Tony Clement was the member then. I was there with our dearly departed friend Peter Kormos. Tony Clement promised my community that the 406 extension, the double-widening, would happen if Frank Sheehan was elected: "If you elect Frank, this is going to happen in the next couple of years." Well, that was in 1999; it is now 2015. The project is almost completed; it's probably a year or a year and a half away from completion. So it took almost 20 years to actually get that work done.

Like Essex, my riding of Niagara has a great agricultural background. We have flower greenhouses and we have fruit farms, and we have vegetable greenhouses as well. Those people need to get their product to market. We hear every day in this Legislature about the gridlock in Toronto and the loss to the economy here in the city of Toronto, but our communities—our rural communities and our small communities in the north, the south, the east and in the west—all have those same challenges. They can't attract new business and they can't attract more population growth if they do not have the tools, the roads and the hydro that they're looking for as well in Essex.

I think that when governments actually take on a project and they make municipalities do five- and 10-year plans, they should actually meet those commitments. If you're going to build 80 kilometres in Essex, then it should be done in a reasonable period of time. In my case, it was really only 30 kilometres in the expansion and it took almost 20 years.

I hope you support the member from Essex's motion today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Essex.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I want to thank the members from Chatham-Kent-Essex, Davenport, Niagara Falls,



Newmarket—Aurora, Wellington—Halton Hills, Durham and Welland.

That is a tragic story of a promise that isn't kept. It doesn't really leave me very optimistic, unfortunately, but nevertheless I will endeavour because I think that that is what my predecessor would want me to do. The late Bruce Crozier, as the road is aptly named after his effort, I think would lobby his own government if this was the case, in which a promise was made and a promise was not kept.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, I come from a place where we value that. It's a virtue and it's something that Bruce held. I think it was a large degree of his success that he did what he said he was going to do. That's all this motion does.

This isn't a project. I appreciate that all of our regions have various infrastructure needs and priorities that we all would like to see completed or even started. The difference here is that this project is two thirds done. It was promised in 2006. We were told that it would be done by 2015. We are in calendar year 2015, and we see no effort or action on the part of the government to begin the process of finishing Highway 3. Our communities need it. Our small businesses need it. Our agriculture communities are demanding it and deserve it, frankly, for the amount of contribution that they put into our GDP and the effort and the growth that they've given to our agriculture industry.

We need this; we deserve it. It is my honour to stand here in this House today to fight and to champion it on behalf of my region. It's a promise that I made during the last election, and this gives me the first opportunity to continue to fight for it.

Your vote as government members will seal your fate in southwestern Ontario when it comes to your electoral success, because you will once and for all prove that your word is either good or not worth anything. This is your opportunity to show us that you can fulfill a promise. We hope that you do that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will take the vote on that item at the end of private members' public business.

## VACCINATIONS

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Ontario Legislative Assembly should recognize that evidence clearly shows vaccinations keep Ontarians safe and protect children from many serious, preventable diseases which are easily spread in schools and public places, including to individuals who are unable to receive vaccinations due to medical conditions or their age, and that the Legislative Assembly should strongly encourage all parents and guardians to ensure that children who are medically able are vaccinated.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** This motion addressing the importance of vaccinating our children is intended to bring

clarity to the confusion now undermining the science behind life-saving immunization. The vast majority of Canadian children—about 95% of them—are protected by vaccinations by the time they enter school at age five. Their parents recognize the proven science which underscores the medical evidence that immunization works. It not only protects children from disease but also those around them.

**1540**

But in recent years, we have seen a troubling new trend. With families opting out of vaccinations here in Ontario, those children are not only at risk of harmful and sometimes deadly diseases, but they are also putting other children at risk at school and in the community.

There are children who are not able to participate in our immunization program due to medical reasons. It's our responsibility as parents to ensure that we are protecting these children by vaccinating our own children.

In our province, for over a century, dedicated researchers and health care professionals have worked tirelessly to reduce and eliminate a long list of infectious diseases which at one time ravaged our population: cholera, smallpox, tuberculosis, diphtheria, typhus, polio, tetanus, whooping cough, rubella, meningitis and measles. If you ask your grandparents or your great-grandparents, if they're still alive, they'll tell you what it was like when there was an outbreak of one of these debilitating diseases in their community.

Polio, for example, left many children paralyzed. At its height in 1953, polio caused about 500 deaths in Canada, while disabling thousands more. But two years later, when a polio vaccine was introduced, the incident rate dropped dramatically. By the mid-1990s, Canada and all of the Americas were certificated as polio-free, and today around the globe, polio has been virtually eliminated.

Another contagious disease that has afflicted millions of people around the planet is measles. Also known as rubella or red measles, this disease is a highly contagious virus. Symptoms of measles include fever, cough and a blotchy rash. It's easily spread from person to person through direct contact or through the air from sneezing or coughing. A severe case can bring on brain swelling, pneumonia and hearing loss. The World Health Organization has stated that measles is the leading global cause of vaccine-preventable deaths in children under five.

Before a vaccine was introduced in Canada in the early 1960s, we averaged about 400,000 cases of measles every year. By the mid-1990s, that number had dropped dramatically, to just over 2,000. Immunization is truly one of the most significant advancements in public health in this country and has saved more lives than any other health measure.

So considering the benefits to the health and well-being of all Canadians, why do we now see the emergence of skepticism questioning the efficacy of immunization? We've heard the fear mongering expressed by those who are opposed to vaccinations. Some claim that the vaccines contain dangerous chemicals. Others believe

that they can combat potentially deadly diseases using so-called alternative treatments.

If you enter "anti-vaccination" on an Internet search, you will find a Wild West of fear mongering and conspiracy theories. There are those who suggest that there's a link between immunization and autism. Celebrities Jenny McCarthy and Alicia Silverstone, preaching from a wide-reaching soapbox, have fuelled this debate.

Anti-vaxxers point to a 1998 study that suggested a possible link between the MMR vaccine—that stands for measles, mumps and rubella—and autism. The study, which appeared in the medical journal *The Lancet*, set off a firestorm of controversy but was later debunked as being fraudulent and misleading. In fact, 10 of the 13 authors of that paper later said that they should not have published it. The *Lancet* even discredited the claim that the MMR vaccine is linked to autism spectrum disorder.

But the damage was done. There are parents today who honestly believe that they're making the right choice for their children by saying no to vaccinations. Sadly, they are putting their children and others at great risk.

We saw this recently as measles flared up in parts of Ontario. The first cases appeared in Toronto and were soon followed by several reported cases in the Niagara area. Starting on February 2 of this year, there were four confirmed cases of measles in Toronto, and that number across Canada surged to 137. There were a total of nine cases in Toronto, six in the Niagara region and one in both Peel and Halton regions. But the worst-hit region was the Lanaudière area of Quebec, where there were 119 confirmed cases of measles, and that truly is a troubling figure.

Coming into contact with this virus can be devastating, not only for those who contract the virus but also for everyone in the household and those who come into contact with them.

A troubling example of this is the case of a young family in York region. A mother of two small children was called by York Region Public Health on February 9 after visiting her doctor's office in Markham. She was told that a patient who had visited the same office had been diagnosed with measles. Now, her baby, not old enough to be vaccinated, and her toddler, only having received one dose of the two-dose vaccine, were forced to stay at home for the 21-day incubation period.

These vaccine-preventable diseases are incredibly contagious and especially dangerous, as many do not show signs or symptoms of infection for anywhere between seven and 21 days. It's for this reason that we do need to protect the most vulnerable who are unable to protect themselves, especially where these diseases are being spread by unsuspecting carriers in public places.

In Ontario, we do have a very strict protocol for the vaccination of children. Legally, if you attend school in this province, you must be vaccinated. The Immunization of School Pupils Act, the ISPA, requires that parents of children attending primary or secondary school provide their local medical officer of health with proof that their child had their immunization against the designated diseases, but exemptions are allowed on the basis of a

parent's religious or philosophical beliefs. Only about 2% of Ontario students, on average, are opting for this exemption.

Immunization authorities tell us that an estimated 95% vaccine coverage is needed to stop the spread of a virus. This is referred to as "herd immunity." It is true not just for measles but for all vaccine-preventable illnesses. So some parents may think that their kids are safe from these illnesses because their classmates are vaccinated, but if too many parents are of this mindset, we're going to see lower vaccination rates in our classrooms, putting all students at risk, putting younger siblings at risk, and putting the general public at risk when they leave the classroom.

Mr. Speaker, you may have heard of the recent outbreak of mumps in the NHL this past winter. Nine players were affected from the New York Rangers, the Minnesota Wild, and the Anaheim Ducks. They missed up to eight games each. Now, team doctors were quick to act and gave the players booster shots, stopping the spread of the virus.

The importance of vaccinating is simply unquestionable. Preventing illness is not only good for our public health; it's also the best option for our public purse. Preventing illnesses with vaccines keeps Ontarians out of emergency rooms and doctors' offices, leaving space open for patients who do need critical care, preventing the spread of the virus, and leaving funds available for other important services within our health care system.

Vaccines have saved more lives in the last 50 years than any other health intervention program in Canada. I'm proud of this government for having such a strong immunization strategy.

In Ontario, the provincial government currently funds 22 vaccines, providing protection against 16 different illnesses. Publicly funded vaccines are provided through many different programs. There's the infant and childhood immunizations, school-based immunizations, adult immunizations, the Universal Influenza Immunization Program, and high-risk immunization programs. The research is currently under way for new vaccines, and we all need to be concerned about this.

Health organizations in Ontario do work very closely with Health Canada studying newly approved vaccines, always looking for new, innovative ways to keep Ontarians healthy and at their very best.

Mr. Speaker, you might have heard the recent good news of the very special gift that Canada has offered to the newly born Princess Charlotte, the latest addition to the royal family. In her name, our federal government is making a charitable donation of \$100,000 to Immunize Canada. This is an organization that promotes the safe use of vaccines across our nation. The funds are going to be used to educate the public on the benefits of vaccinating. We know that having access to life-saving vaccines will ensure that children coast to coast will have the best start at life.

1550

Mr. Speaker, while I was preparing to present this motion to you and to the House today, I was reminded of



what I saw on a number of occasions while producing television documentaries from parts of sub-Saharan Africa. I saw mothers and fathers lined up for hours seeking basic health care for their children. I saw young people afflicted with diseases which are easily preventable in this country because of our access to vaccines. Where immunization is offered, those parents that I saw considered themselves to be fortunate to receive this treatment for their children.

Mr. Speaker, despite the skepticism and the naysayers, the science is very clear. The history is clear. Immunization saves lives, and we are so fortunate in this province to have fully funded access to vaccinations. So I encourage my colleagues from all sides of the House to support this motion to protect all Ontarians from vaccine-preventable illnesses.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I just want to take a couple of minutes to put some views on the record. My first comment will be that I will be supporting the initiative of the member.

I want to mention three groups of people that we have to recognize. The first are those who have, for whatever reasons, unfounded hesitation about using vaccinations. As I think has already been pointed out and certainly will continue to be pointed out, this is a group that are not only a risk for themselves, but they are also a huge risk for the second group of people. This is, fortunately, a small group of people who cannot accept inoculation; for whatever medical reason, they can't. The third group is the almost 99% of the population that should and does immunize their children. The reason for that importance is for that second group I mentioned. They need to be in the presence of the vast majority of people having received inoculation, because they have no ability to protect themselves.

I would say today that what we should conclude with is the important role of education and information that must go out to those people who for unfounded hesitation have not had their children vaccinated.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** It's an honour to rise to speak to this private member's motion on vaccinations. I'm a registered nurse who worked for many years in the field. I saw first-hand the need for education and awareness around immunizations. Only in the last few months we've seen a resurgence of measles. In my own area of Niagara, they had to open immunization clinics actually, and six children were diagnosed with measles most recently. Back in the early 2000s, we saw the outbreak of SARS, which took the lives of many health care workers and many Ontarians over a period of a number of months. Then in 2011 in the Niagara region, we saw an outbreak of *C. difficile* where I think as many as 16 patients were affected. Some of that could have been avoided because some of it was due to cuts in budgets around housekeeping and disinfecting in hospitals.

But to go back to the bill, infection spreads very easily, very readily. So I think that it's important that not only Ontarians, not only the people who are responsible for making sure their kids get the vaccinations, but also physicians, health care workers and public health departments do a great job of trying to educate parents about the importance of vaccinations and making sure they're kept up to date, that they're medically necessary, except in those few cases when it is medically—

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** Contraindicated.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Contraindicated, right. That's the word, yes—medically contraindicated to the patient.

Unfortunately, there's still a small number of people who are misled into thinking that vaccinations are dangerous. There's been this whole discussion in the last couple of years about vaccinations and autism, although there isn't any medical evidence, I think, to totally support that at this point. There can be complications from these contagious communicable diseases, like measles, that can be much more problematic than the actual disease itself, things like encephalitis, inner ear infections and pneumonia that people can actually get when they're not vaccinated.

The bill is encouraging legislators to encourage parents, but I don't really know that it's our job to do that. It's the job of the health care workers. It's the job of physicians. It's the job of our community health centres, our family health teams and our public health units. I think the job of the government is to make sure that those particular agencies are appropriately funded so that they're not having to constantly cut back their resources. If you have enough people working in those particular agencies to actually educate and bring awareness to the issues and the importance of vaccination, I think that is more important than actually asking legislators to encourage parents to do this.

I know that this government has certainly had a failed strategy around immunization over the last short while. In 2014, the Auditor General actually reported that when she reviewed the immunization strategy, she clearly stated the government was failing to protect Ontarians, and she was distressed to know that 20% of Ontario's flu vaccine goes missing each year. That's a lot of money. That's a lot of money going somewhere. We're buying these vaccines—sometimes it's problematic to even try to get them in a timely way. Then they go missing and the government can't find out—they have no tracking system to find out where those hundreds of thousands of dollars in vaccines disappeared to.

There were 21,000 instances alone last year when the minister paid physicians and pharmacists to administer the flu vaccine more than once to the same patient. I hope the government has actually gone back and retrieved those overpayments from druggists and physicians.

I find it strange that, in this modern day, the government still doesn't have an appropriate tracking system for immunization in the province. The federal government as well, their leadership is lacking too, because they need to create a national database.

Already the new Panorama database has doubled its original budget—another example of poor public policy by the government. It's like another SAMS debacle, except now it's with the immunization program. The government spent \$142 million to better track vaccinations and children who have not had their vaccinations, but it's still not working. Local health officials have reported that there are so many problems in that current database system that they can no longer warn or suspend those who put their classmates at risk. Thousands of records were accidentally duplicated across health units in the province, making officials unable to know who was immunized and who wasn't immunized. They've wasted so much time sorting out those duplications that children in kindergarten and grade 1 haven't even been added to the new system. If we see an outbreak of measles in a classroom, health officials will be unable to isolate vaccinated or non-vaccinated kids.

**1600**

The new system also doesn't permit any temporary exemptions for parents who need time to find their missing records. This means that parents won't get a reminder from the system for their child when they need a booster shot.

Once again, although the intent of this private member's bill is good, we are reminded of the importance of accountability and transparency around public policy. We're also reminded of the waste of public tax dollars when systems don't work. I hope that this debate gives some momentum to improve the immunization strategy as we raise these problems for you today.

Certainly, New Democrats support having every person immunized who is medically able to be. But we also support appropriate funding and not freezing of budgets for public health units, community health centres, hospitals and family health teams, because when you freeze those budgets, you end up actually cutting their budgets. They have to cut somewhere. As I said, during SARS and particularly during the C. difficile in Niagara, it was due to budget cuts that people got infected and lost their lives.

I'm happy to have had the opportunity to speak to this. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'm pleased to rise and speak in support of this motion that has been introduced by the member from Kitchener Centre, which says "that the Legislative Assembly should strongly encourage all parents and guardians to ensure that children who are medically able are vaccinated."

I'm just surprised that, in the 21st century, we even need to have a motion like this because, as the member from Kitchener Centre quite correctly said, I don't think there is a single medical intervention in Canada or anywhere in the world that has saved more lives, or saved more people from disabling diseases, than vaccinations. So it's very telling that we actually have to have a motion around this and a debate around this.

I do want to speak to something, Mr. Speaker. I want to share a story, because I remember it so vividly. When I was in grade 5 and grade 6—I even remember the grades—my sister and I would walk a short distance to school every day with my friend and her brother. The four of us would walk.

Our school had a school uniform of a white blouse, and a blue skirt that had to be up to the knee—or not, but anyway. This friend of mine had special dispensation to wear a long skirt. She wore a skirt all the way to her ankles, because she had had polio. As kids, we would all walk together, and we often tried to keep pace with her, but as kids, we would often skip ahead of her. I can still remember, in the image of my mind even now, the three of us way ahead and she walking slowly, limping, coming up at the rear. At the time, we didn't think much of it, but now that I'm much older, I try to think of how hard it must have been for her to be always catching up. I have no recollection at all of her ever complaining.

What's really telling is, this was not in the 1950s, as Daiene was talking about polio in Canada. This was in the 1980s. As late as 1988, in India, there were annually 200,000 cases of polio.

But what's really remarkable is that in 2011, against all odds, India finally became polio-free, because for three years, in a population of 1.2 billion people, there was not a single case of polio. That is considered one of the biggest, biggest triumphs of public health and modern medicine, and that is the true story of vaccinations.

But here sometimes, I think we become a victim of our own success, because we have forgotten the lives that vaccinations save. There's an entire generation that has probably grown up without actually seeing a friend with polio. So I think there's a little bit of complacency as—you know, this debate around whether we should vaccinate or not.

When you look around the world; when you've grown up like I have, with a friend who had polio—and I know many people, depending on your demographics, even in Canada, may have remembered friends who had polio—you really begin to realize the value of these vaccinations and the tragic consequences of not vaccinating.

That was brought home to me by an article I read in CNN that talked about this young five-year-old girl in India who became the last person to contract polio. Her story is a story of parents who had vaccinated their three other kids but for some reason didn't vaccinate this child. They live with that regret, that this child is the poster child, the one who became the last person in a population of 1.2 billion to contract polio.

I think we need to bring these stories to life to remind people that we cannot take these gains for granted and that it's really important that all of us who can and are medically able to should get vaccinated, for ourselves and the greater good of society.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I wish we didn't have to all still be talking about trying to convince parents to vaccinate



their children. I think that a decade ago, it wasn't so difficult, but over the last eight or nine years it's been very difficult to convince parents that, yes, vaccines are safe. We're hearing stories of parents who had embarked on a program of vaccination for their children, because they had been convinced, but they hadn't yet been able to complete—because we know you can't suddenly give all the vaccinations at one time—and their children contracted measles or rubella.

It is heartbreaking when we think about medical professionals, people who graduated medical school, who had to retract their studies. They did fraudulent studies which convinced many in the communities—parents, and celebrities, unfortunately—to jump on the bandwagon to convince parents that there's a connection between autism and vaccines. My husband will always say, "Well that's an association, not a causation." He's a physician. His favourite example is that people who have Jacuzzis have more heart attacks. It doesn't mean that if you get rid of your Jacuzzi, you're going to have a lower incidence of heart attack. It just means that there is an association between Jacuzzis and maybe a sedentary lifestyle, a more affluent, going-to-restaurants-more-often lifestyle. It is not a cause of the heart attacks.

I think that it's our job here as legislators to serve the people who elected us, who put us here, and to explain the science. Not to focus on the political science, not to just create legislation to force people to do things, but to have people understand the science behind vaccination, to understand that it's about being part of a community and doing what's helpful to your community. There are people, we've heard, who are in the community who cannot be vaccinated, and it means that everybody who can be vaccinated must be vaccinated. We can all do better.

I remember when the chickenpox vaccine came out because that was in my time as a parent. My two older children had the chickenpox but my two younger children had the chickenpox vaccine. I considered myself a little micro-study in whether or not you should give your children the chickenpox vaccine. I know people who had chickenpox as an adult. It's not pretty and it's not comfortable, Mr. Speaker. I think you'll agree with me on that.

Japan started with the chickenpox vaccine about 10 years before us, and we were a little slow to jump on the bandwagon. I want to remind everybody that it's not just that it's inconvenient to have children have the chickenpox—although, I'll say it was a pleasure not to have to deal with it two more times—it's that the vaccine for chickenpox is also the same vaccine for shingles. It's a real problem in our communities: elderly parents, immunocompromised people and pregnant people who end up getting shingles. It can be very damaging to themselves and an unborn fetus. We can do better, and we will do better.

The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care spoke about polio, and I'm reminded of a great-aunt I had who was what we call a *chalutz*, somebody who

helped create the state of Israel. Her name was Rachel, which means Rachel. She had polio; she had the special shoe which had, like, a six-inch platform, and a hip that didn't work properly.

**1610**

It didn't stop her in her life, and yes, she did manage to have some children and adopt some children, but what a struggle her life was because of that. Like the associate minister said, she didn't complain but that doesn't mean that within she didn't have those struggles.

I hope that everybody here does their part in their community. Maybe we can go and speak when those meetings are held at local hospitals to convince people to ensure that their children are properly vaccinated; to not listen to these sort of Internet scientists, as I guess you could call them, who think they know what they're talking about—we all know they don't—and to instead immunize their children, and maybe to create that proper registry, as we heard from the NDP member, so that people can easily go on and ensure, if they're divorced, that their ex-spouse is indeed vaccinating their children and not just telling them they are, so that they can actually track it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really think it's an important topic.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I wanted to share a story with the people in this House and the people listening.

Today, we're talking about the importance of vaccinations for children, and I do believe that it is very important for everybody to have their children vaccinated, if the children are healthy enough to receive the vaccination, of course.

But words come cheap around here and sometimes actions speak a little bit louder. I would encourage all of my peers to really think about it seriously when a parent comes to you and asks you to sign one of those forms to have their children excluded from vaccination. I won't name names or point fingers, but there are a lot of people in this House who may be speaking in favour of having every child in Ontario vaccinated and about all of the good that vaccination has made, and some of the horrific consequences of those diseases that are now gone—for a generation now they are gone because we have those vaccines—but then, when they are face to face with the parent—and think of it as being face to face with somebody who votes for you or against you—they make the wrong decision.

They say the right thing. They say that every child in Ontario should be vaccinated, but when that parent, who makes it clear that he or she is not going to vote for you anymore if you don't sign this piece of paper that says that you don't have to have your child vaccinated—do you know what they do, Speaker? They sign their name to it. They sign their name to it, and then the child does not have to receive vaccinations and the child is allowed to go back to school. There are many MPPs who have done this in this House.

*Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm being asked to name a few of my colleagues who have done this. This is not the point. The point is really to show that we have a responsibility as MPPs to do what is right for the people of this province. To do what is right for the people of this province is to speak with our words and to speak with our actions.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Municipal Affairs, come to order.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Speaker.

I encourage every member of this House to really think about it strongly. Next time one of your constituents comes to your office or comes to one of your constituency assistants and asks to have this form signed because they are somebody who supports you, do the right thing: Send them to a health professional and tell them that as an MPP, you won't be signing those dispensations because you believe in vaccinations and you believe that every child in Ontario should be protected.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** It's my pleasure to stand in the House today and speak to this motion. I want to, in so doing, thank my colleague from Kitchener Centre for facilitating this important conversation.

You know, Speaker, it's always good to hear support for vaccinations from all sides of the House. I always welcome, and I know my colleagues do too, positive suggestions based on evidence and not on rhetoric, because support for robust public health should never be grounded in partisanship.

Keeping the citizens of Ontario safe and healthy is one of our government's highest priorities. Some of the recent global health crises go to show how quickly and terribly an illness or disease can spread through a population if the proper precautions are not taken. Indeed, they are reminders of just how fortunate we are to live in a society, in a province, with strong public health infrastructure in place where all Ontarians can access and benefit from the life-saving benefit of vaccinations.

I had the privilege of recently hearing a talk in Burlington given by a constituent of mine, Dr. Anthony Ford-Jones, a renowned paediatrician who has dedicated his life to treating and helping children. Last year, Dr. Ford-Jones received the Distinguished Community Paediatrician Award at the Canadian Paediatric Society annual conference in recognition of his significant contributions to the field of community paediatrics.

Dr. Ford-Jones's talk focused on the health and well-being of our children. In it, he spoke of his concerns regarding the "anti-vaccination movement," which he characterized as misguided. He went on to say, "It makes me sad, mad and frightened to see whooping cough and measles cases." In a conversation we had recently, he reminded me how terror-stricken parents were in the 1950s because of polio. They wouldn't let their children swim in public pools and they avoided public places until a vaccine was developed. Only then did they breathe a sigh of a relief.

He noted a more recent case and situation in the Russian Federation in 1990 where, in order to save money, the government stopped vaccinating for diphtheria, thinking the danger was over. Sadly, close to 157,000 cases were reported throughout the region, with close to 5,000 deaths—which is absolutely remarkable for such a preventable cause—until control measures were brought to bear.

Dr. Ford-Jones also underscored the important public health benefits of vaccination from the perspective of vaccinating one's own children. Some children, he noted, are hard to protect: Those on steroids, those who have suppressed immune systems, transplant recipients, those with irradiated blood diseases and leukemias. All are susceptible, as they cannot be vaccinated. These examples highlight the importance we all play in ensuring public safety and the health and well-being of one's own children as well as others.

In short, there is significant scientific proof to show that vaccinations are one of the most effective means of preventing the spread of infectious diseases in our population. So it is our duty to ensure that we can offer this preventative measure to as many Ontarians as possible who are medically able.

By ensuring that most of the population is immunized against common ailments such as measles, the mumps or rubella, we can also protect those in our communities who are not medically able to be vaccinated.

Our government is committed to ensuring that Ontarians in communities across this province can go about their lives without fear of infection from these common yet highly contagious and potentially deadly diseases, especially amongst our children. We recently enhanced our Immunization of School Pupils Act, which aims to help protect our children from many serious diseases that can easily be spread in schools by ensuring their vaccinations are up to date. I would encourage all Ontarians to check and make sure that their own immunizations are up to date as well.

Despite the overwhelming support from the medical community and myriads of studies that show the effectiveness of vaccinations, there are individuals and groups out there that believe that getting a needle is bad for you and can cause all kinds of long-term effects. The reality is that there is no convincing evidence that vaccines are in any way harmful to your health. Virtually every study that has shown negative long-term effects from vaccines has failed to stand up to the peer review process and has been debunked entirely.

It would be irresponsible for us to risk the health of our communities over misplaced fears and bad science. Encouraging all of our citizens who are able to get vaccinated would go a long way to protect the health of every citizen in our province.

I will be supporting this motion and I encourage all of my colleagues in this House to do the same, not just for our own health but for the health of our children and grand-children.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?



**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** It's a pleasure to speak to this motion from the member from Kitchener Centre. I'm happy to support it. But I have to tell you a quick story.

I don't know how many of you are involved in the Equal Voice program called Girls Government, but I've been working with two schools in my community since January, and the member from Kitchener Centre will be pleased to know that this was one of our points of discussion.

1620

As you know, with Girls Government, what happens is that young ladies in public school who proactively choose to participate in this program have a little bit of a debating session. I talk about the shield in the Legislative Assembly. It's in Latin, but when you translate it, it says, "Hear the other side." We were talking about how you don't always have to support, but it's always respectful, and you should always listen to the conversation and the debate. Then we got into, "Now let's think of some ideas"—hopefully provincial—"that we need to do or you collectively would like to see come forward."

One of the ideas was that all children who attend public school who are medically able to—you could have actually had them write it for you, because it was very similar—be vaccinated. If they're not vaccinated and there is no medical reason for them not to be vaccinated, these young ladies felt that they shouldn't be allowed in school, because they were going to impact and hurt their fellow classmates. It was a very interesting conversation and debate, so when I saw this resolution, I was reminded of that very interesting and exciting debate that young ladies in grade 5 and grade 6 were involved in.

Sometimes we don't give our young people enough credit that they're paying attention. Of course, this was all coming forward at a time earlier this year when there were some very serious problems happening—primarily in the States, but as with everything that happens in the great USA, it tends to trickle across the border and we start dealing with it here in Canada as well.

They felt very strongly that people who are attending public school systems should be properly vaccinated in order to protect everyone who is in the school system. I just found it a great point of discussion and wanted to share that, because it does bolster your argument for supporting your resolution, which I'm pleased to do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** At the outset, I would like to compliment and salute my colleague from Kitchener Centre for bringing forth this particular motion, which once again re-emphasizes, underlines and accentuates the importance of vaccination—not, by the way, merely for children, but also into adult life.

As a physician, Speaker, I can tell you that we vaccinate for a whole host of diseases between zero to five, diseases which include diphtheria, pertussis, polio, tetanus, haemophilus influenzae B, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, meningitis and so on. The list goes on.

As has been mentioned, the idea of vaccination and immunization—by the way, Speaker, particularly during National Immunization Awareness Week—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We've got about 20 conversations going on, and it's very difficult for the speaker and myself to hear, so if I could ask everyone to keep it down.

Proceed.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** I appreciate your persistence, Speaker, but all these parallel conversations are about what I'm saying right now, so not a problem.

I want to say first of all that, as has been mentioned, vaccination is perhaps the single most important and efficacious or effective manoeuvre that has happened in the history of medicine.

I remember, for example, before our government authorized vaccinations for meningitis for two million Ontario children, the presentation that was made here was by a pediatric neurologist from the Hospital for Sick Children whose own daughter had suffered the consequences—or the sequelae, as we say—of deafness post-meningitis infection. I remember the extraordinarily compelling presentation he made. He said, "The last thing she said to me was, 'Daddy, why are you pretending to speak to me?'"

I can tell you, Speaker, it was that kind of personalized story that mobilized the government, and we more or less instantaneously signed into law the fact that children—two million strong across Ontario—would be benefiting from meningitis vaccines.

There are a number of important points that were made. Now this is a little bit bizarre to explain, but vaccinations are offered at a particular age. They don't cause problems, but because they happen at the sort of same time as other conditions may develop—for example, autism and so on—people think that there's an association with it or a causality, but that's not true. For example, let's say people thought of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine, which is given to children at age 4 or 5, "Oh, that causes you to go to kindergarten." It doesn't cause you to go to kindergarten; it just happens to happen at approximately the same time. So that's an association, not a causality.

This is where I think we need to educate our peers and Ontarians about the science of what is actually going on. The science tells us that not only should we support these vaccinations, but others, including human papilloma virus, hepatitis A, hepatitis B and so on.

I salute the member from Kitchener Centre.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I support this resolution because I recognize the impact of vaccines and immunizations in protecting people. As I said last month in my statement on National Immunization Awareness Week, immunization can be heralded as one of the greatest achievements in public health of the 20th century. Vaccines have resulted in the control, eradication or near-elimination of numerous infectious diseases and saved more Canadian

lives over the past five decades than any other health intervention.

Vaccines are the single most proactive measure against potential illness, yet Ontarian's seven-year-olds are below the national target for vaccination against the measles, mumps and rubella, and chicken pox. I think it's troubling that we have taken for granted the impact that vaccines have had on our society, which is leaving some people with the false comfort that their children can go unvaccinated.

We know that there is an association between this growing trend of people refusing vaccines and the growing spread of disease. Ontario had 18 cases of measles between December 2014 and March 2015, an outbreak that began in December at Disneyland. While public health officials are now confident that our province is measles-free, I think we still need to do better to protect the young, the old, the vulnerable and everyone in between. The death of one is one too many.

One such measure would be better tracking of how many residents are vaccinated against diseases such as measles, a problem that was highlighted by the Auditor General last December. There is no denying that our schools are safer and our students healthier when they are immunized. Thanks to immunization, it is almost unheard of today that a child in Ontario or Canada will die of smallpox or diphtheria.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Kitchener Centre. You have two minutes.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Let me first start by thanking the member for York-Simcoe, the member for Welland, the Associate Minister of Long-Term Care and Wellness, the members for Thornhill, Nickel Belt, Burlington, Dufferin-Caledon, Etobicoke North and Grey—sorry, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I should know where you are because I'm a neighbour of yours on occasion.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** You're welcome any time.

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** This weekend, I'll be up there. The only thing standing between me and the weekend is getting through this. So here we go.

This motion is supposed to recognize something that we all assume is really quite simple, and that is the scientific evidence that vaccinations do keep us healthy and safe and that parents are responsible for ensuring that their children are vaccinated from preventable diseases. There was one member who asked, "Why are we even talking about this issue here? Is this not an issue for health care professionals?" But I think that we do need to talk about this here as legislators. We need to underscore that we believe in evidence and not in fear-mongering.

There are a couple of reasons why this is important to me. First of all, as a mother of three, I was always very concerned with their health and very committed to making sure they were healthy and safe. I consider us to be very fortunate in this country that we do have access to these immunizations.

Secondly, as a former news broadcaster, I have to tell you that it troubles me when I see misinformation that puts people at risk. We have this research-based evidence

that's very clear that vaccinations do work. We know that immunizations are one of the most important advancements in public health in this country. They have saved more lives than any other health measure.

I encourage all members on both sides of the House to support this very important motion, and I look forward to seeing how you all vote.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 52, standing in the name of Ms. Scott. Ms. Scott has moved private member's notice of motion number 48. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Natyshak has moved private member's notice of motion number 46. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay." In my opinion, the ayes have it.

We will deal with the vote at the end of this business.

## VACCINATIONS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Ms. Vernile has moved private member's notice of motion number 47. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1631 to 1636.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can I ask members to please take their seats?

Mr. Natyshak has moved private member's notice of motion number 46.

All those in favour, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Arnott, Ted  
Barrett, Toby  
Bisson, Gilles  
Clark, Steve  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Fife, Catherine

Gretzky, Lisa  
Harris, Michael  
Hudak, Tim  
Jones, Sylvia  
Mantha, Michael  
Martow, Gila  
McMeekin, Ted

Nicholls, Rick  
Sattler, Peggy  
Scott, Laurie  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Vanthof, John



Forster, Cindy  
French, Jennifer K.  
Gélinas, France

Miller, Paul  
Munro, Julia  
Natyshak, Taras

Walker, Bill

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed, please rise and remain standing until recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Baker, Yvan  
Ballard, Chris  
Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
Chan, Michael  
Coteau, Michael  
Damerla, Dipika  
Delaney, Bob  
Dhillon, Vic  
Dong, Han

Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Hoggarth, Ann  
Hoskins, Eric  
Jaczek, Helena  
Kiwala, Sophie  
Kwinter, Monte  
Malhi, Harinder  
Mangat, Amrit  
Martins, Cristina  
McGarry, Kathryn  
McMahon, Eleanor

Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Murray, Glen R.  
Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
Naqvi, Yasir  
Potts, Arthur  
Qaadri, Shafiq  
Vernile, Daiene  
Wong, Soo  
Zimmer, David

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 28; the nays are 31.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion lost.

*Motion negated.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I seek unanimous consent to move a motion without notice to make an appointment for a temporary Environmental Commissioner for a period of six months.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member has requested consent to move a motion. Agreed? I hear a no.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The government House leader seeks unanimous consent. Agreed? I hear a no.

#### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Hamilton Mountain.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'd like to correct my record, Speaker. I said "exaggerated" instead of "exacerbated."

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you to the member for Hamilton Mountain. A member is always given the opportunity to correct their record.

Government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'll try this one more time because maybe the opposition wants to hear the motion this time.

Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding appointment of a temporary Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The government House leader seeks unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Agreed? I heard a no.

#### MIKE O'LEARY

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Wellington–Halton Hills.

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I actually have some sad news. I wish to inform the House of the passing of a municipal councillor in our riding of Wellington–Halton Hills, Councillor Mike O'Leary, who served with distinction on the town of Halton Hills council going back to 2003. I know I speak for all of us in this House when we extend our condolences to his family and our prayers.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you very much for your point of order. Please extend our condolences.

Orders of the day?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The government House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Agreed?

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

This House stands adjourned until Monday, May 25, at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1642.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South -Weston / York-Sud- Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London-Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington-Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia-Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough-Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket-Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand-Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough- Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins-James Bay / Timmins-Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora-Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham-Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West-Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest- Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds-Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton-Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry-Prescott-Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East-Cooksville / Mississauga-Est-Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga-Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax-Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale-High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity-Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough- Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby-Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener-Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwalá, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton–Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brook	
Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉES PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











## Visitors

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4425
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4425
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	4425
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4425

## DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

### Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa

Second reading agreed to .....	4425
--------------------------------	------

## Estimates

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4425
-------------------------------------	------

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4425
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4426
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4426

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Endangered species

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4426
----------------------------	------

### Childhood apraxia of speech

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4426
------------------------	------

### Ismaili community / Communauté ismaélienne

Mr. Shafiq Qadri .....	4426
------------------------	------

### Legislative page program

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4426
---------------------------	------

### Privatization of public assets

Miss Monique Taylor .....	4427
---------------------------	------

### St. Mary of the Angels Catholic School

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4427
-----------------------------	------

### Cailyn Perry

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4427
-----------------------	------

### Nurses

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4428
----------------------------	------

### Children and Youth in Care Day

Ms. Soo Wong .....	4428
--------------------	------

### Member's birthday

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4428
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4428

## Private members' public business

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4428
-------------------------------------	------

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

### Apraxia Awareness Day Act, 2015, Bill 102, Mr. Colle / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour de la sensibilisation à l'apraxie, projet de loi 102, M. Colle

First reading agreed to .....	4429
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4429

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

### Children and Youth in Care Day / Jour des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge

Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4429
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4430
Miss Monique Taylor .....	4431

## PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

### Ontario Retirement Pension Plan

Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4431
------------------------	------

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4432
-------------------------	------

### Terry Fox Day

Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4432
-----------------------	------

### Hydro rates

Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4432
------------------------	------

### Off-road vehicles

Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4432
--------------------------	------

### Student safety

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4433
----------------------------	------

### Trespassing

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4433
------------------------	------

### Hospital funding

Mme France Gélinas .....	4433
--------------------------	------

### Water fluoridation

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4433
----------------------------	------

### Demonstration at Queen's Park

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4434
------------------------	------

### Ontario Disability Support Program

Miss Monique Taylor .....	4434
---------------------------	------

### Student safety

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4434
----------------------------	------

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS /  
AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC  
ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

**Human trafficking / Traite des personnes**

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4435
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4437
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4437
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4438
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4439
Ms. Sophie Kiwala .....	4439
Mr. Michael Harris .....	4440
Mme France Gélinas .....	4441
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4441
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4442
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4442

**Highway improvement**

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4442
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4444
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4445
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4446
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4447
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4447
Mme France Gélinas .....	4449
Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4449
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4449
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4449

**Vaccinations**

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4450
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4452
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4452
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4453
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4453
Mme France Gélinas .....	4454
Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4455
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4456
Mr. Shafiq Qaadri .....	4456
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4456
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4457

**Human trafficking**

Motion agreed to .....	4457
------------------------	------

**Highway improvement**

The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon) .....	4457
---	------

**Vaccinations**

Motion agreed to .....	4457
------------------------	------

**Highway improvement**

Motion negated .....	4458
----------------------	------

**Correction of record**

Miss Monique Taylor .....	4458
---------------------------	------

**Mike O'Leary**

Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4458
----------------------	------



# CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 14 May 2015 / Jeudi 14 mai 2015

## ORDERS OF THE DAYS / ORDRE DU JOUR

<b>Building Ontario Up Act (Budget Measures), 2015, Bill 91, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 pour favoriser l'essor de l'Ontario (mesures budgétaires), projet de loi 91, M. Sousa</b>	
Second reading vote deferred.....	4403
<b>Strengthening and Improving Government Act, 2015, Bill 85, Mme Meilleur / Loi de 2015 sur le renforcement et l'amélioration de la gestion publique, projet de loi 85, Mme Meilleur</b>	
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4403
Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti .....	4404
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4405
Mme France Gélinas .....	4406
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4406
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4406
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4406
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4407
Mr. Michael Harris .....	4409
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4412
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4413

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4414
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4414
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4414
Mr. Joe Dickson .....	4414
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4414
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4414
Mrs. Amrit Mangat .....	4414
Mme France Gélinas .....	4414
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4414
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4414
<b>Legislative pages</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4414
<b>Order and decorum in chamber</b>	
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4414

## ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

<b>Teachers' labour disputes</b>	
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4414
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4414

## Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4414
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4414

## Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4414
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4414

## Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4414
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4414

## Nurses

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4414
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4414

## Teachers' labour disputes

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4414
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4414

## Youth services / Services à la jeunesse

Mme Marie-France Lalonde .....	4414
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4414

## Sexual harassment

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4414
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4414

## Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4414
Hon. Deborah Matthews .....	4414

## Employment standards

Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4414
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4414

## Public safety

Mr. Norm Miller .....	4414
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4414

## Nurses

Mme France Gélinas .....	4414
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4414

## Police services

Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4414
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4414

## Pesticides

Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4414
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4414

## Highway improvement

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4414
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4414

Continued on inside back cover



No. 86A

N° 86A

ISSN 1180-2987

Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Monday 25 May 2015

Lundi 25 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 25 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 25 mai 2015

*The House met at 1030.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ISMAILI FLAG

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the flying of the Ismaili flag.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader wishes to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

The government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that the Ismaili flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole from 11 a.m. up until the next scheduled flag-raising today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Naqvi moves that the Ismaili flag be flown on the Legislature's courtesy flagpole from 11 a.m. up until the next scheduled flag-raising today. Do we agree? Agreed.

Introduction of guests. The member from Timmins—James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No, no, Speaker, I was just going for a walk.

## WEARING OF RIBBONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Community and Social Services on a point of order.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to allow members to wear green ribbons in recognition of the Trillium Gift of Life Network. Members of that organization are present in the Legislature today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Community and Social Services is seeking unanimous consent to wear the green ribbon. Do we agree? Agreed.

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I would like everyone to welcome Toni and Peter Marinakos, from the city of Orillia, who are here today. They've been in the pizza business for 40 years, and for the last 25 years have donated all pizzas all day on Christmas Day to the people in the city of Orillia. Thank you very much. It's good to have you here.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'm pleased to welcome to the House today the family and a friend of today's page captain, Bridget Le Donne. We have her father, Dino Le Donne; her sister, Claire Le Donne; her grandmother, Nina Le Donne; and our former page, her sister Gabrielle Le Donne—welcome back to Queen's Park.

Also here is her skating partner, Jakub Smal. Bridget and Jakub will be representing Canada at the International Children's Games in Innsbruck, Austria, in January 2016.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, I am pleased to introduce representatives from the Canadian Solar Industries Association, including the president and CEO, Mr. John Gorman, and the chair of the board of directors, Mr. Bob Waddell. John and Bob are joined in the gallery today by many other CanSIA member companies who are at the Legislature to participate in a Queen's Park Day. CanSIA hosted a breakfast reception this morning and will continue meeting with members throughout the day. Please join me in welcoming the Canadian Solar Industries Association to the Legislature.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, it gives me pleasure to welcome Ric Randmaa, father of page Madeleine Randmaa. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Good morning, Mr. Speaker. Join me in welcoming—not to the Legislature, but to the world—Alessandro Sebastiani Ferrari, born last Thursday, May 21, to my office manager, Daiana. Congratulations to Daiana, proud dad Gianluca, and big sister Taily.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I'd like to give a warm welcome to Robert Heckbert, a student at Henry Larsen Elementary School in Ottawa. I'm pleased to announce that Robert will be joining us as a legislative page over the next two weeks from the best riding in Ontario.

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have two guests from Scarborough—Agincourt, Jia Shen and Helen Shen, who are the parent and sister of page captain Philip Shen. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome to the Legislature Robert Heckbert, our page from Ottawa—Orléans, and his mother, Susan Bellamy, who is here in the gallery. Welcome.

**Hon. Ted McMeekin:** I'm pleased to introduce Diane Crawshaw from the great riding of Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, who is here today watching question period. Diane is the mother of page Dale. Hello to you both, and welcome.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd like to welcome representatives from the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies to Queen's Park today. Over the next three days, mem-



bers of J&J's Canadian and global team will be hosting a number of interesting events, including a discussion on diabetes today and an innovation round table tomorrow. Welcome to question period.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Please welcome Wilson Teixeira from Able Translations. He's here with a number of guests on a Canada-Portugal trade mission, including the Associação Empresarial de Portugal—Ana Ochôa, Sandra Silva, Marco Macedo, Andreia Matos and Adelina Lobo.

*Remarks in Portuguese.*

But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, Ali Ghiassi, my chief of staff, is here with his mother, Mandana Geith. Welcome to Queen's Park as well.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd also like to welcome Ronnie Gavsie, president and CEO of the Trillium Gift of Life Network, as well as Adam Lemm, who is also from the Trillium Gift of Life Network.

I'd like to take this opportunity as well to invite all members to join me in a caucus photo on the main staircase—following question period—with the Trillium Gift of Life Network.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I just want to welcome a constituent from my riding, Vita Peri, who is the mother of page Luke.

#### SPECIAL REPORT, OMBUDSMAN

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table a report from the Ombudsman of Ontario, respecting his investigation into the timeliness and effectiveness of Hydro One's process for responding to customer concerns.

#### REPORT, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I also beg to inform the House that, during the adjournment, the following report was tabled: on May 21, 2015, the report from the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario concerning the Report of the Review of Expense Claims Covering the Period April 1, 2014, to March 31, 2015, Pursuant to the Cabinet Ministers' and Opposition Leaders' Expenses Review and Accountability Act, 2002.

#### ORAL QUESTIONS

##### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Another week in the longest teachers' strike in 25 years has passed, and still high school students in Durham, Peel and Sudbury are not getting the education they're entitled to. Durham is now in the 25th day of their strike and those high school students have lost almost a third of their semester.

1040

The Premier was a school board trustee. She shouldn't need an obscure commission to tell her what we already

know: The school year is in jeopardy. So, Premier, will you act today? Will your back-to-work legislation ensure that these students will finish their school year? And can you promise grade 12 students that they will graduate in time to continue their studies next September?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** We share the concern about the students. We understand that the students in Durham, in Rainbow and in Peel have been out of class far too long. That's why, a week ago Friday, I asked the Education Relations Commission for their advice on jeopardy. I'm pleased to report that, within the last hour, I have received the advice from the ERC and they have in fact advised that the school year is in jeopardy in Durham—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Would you like the—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, come to order. The Minister of Government and Consumer Services, come to order.

Please finish.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** They have advised that the school year is in jeopardy in Durham, in Rainbow and in Peel. We will be tabling back-to-work legislation this afternoon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A follow-up to the question from the leader: Provincial negotiations have been at an impasse, and we know they broke down again over the weekend. Your government has now said they will take appropriate action. I understand you say you will table back-to-work legislation today, but two weeks ago you were going to light a fire and, still, we've never seen a spark until this very minute, when we may see back-to-work legislation today. I don't know how long that will actually drag on for.

Mr. Speaker, there certainly hasn't been any sense of urgency on the part of the minister or the Premier. The students are going to lose their entire school year if we do not get them back in the classroom. For example, Durham students alone have been out 25 days today. That's 560,000 student days in Durham alone. On top of that, there are only 25 days left in the year. So already we know there's a real problem with getting their school year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I guess what we're saying is, we're—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A reminder for everybody: I give you your cues and I stick with them. Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The act that we will be introducing this afternoon is obviously designed to get kids back into the classroom. We want the kids back in the classroom as quickly as possible.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke: second time.

Carry on.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** In order to get the kids back in the classroom as quickly as possible, we need to pass the legislation. So I am writing to the leaders of both opposition parties to ask for their co-operation in getting this legislation passed this afternoon. But we need their co-operation to do that, Speaker. We can't pass the legislation this afternoon unless we have the co-operation of the other two parties, so I'm waiting to hear their response.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I guess the problem is, you asked the Education Relations Commission 10 days ago, on May 15. They never even worked over the holiday weekend. Neither did the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

All of a sudden now, Mr. Speaker, they're going to table back-to-work. They want everyone to support this today, but the bottom line is, where has the urgency been? Where has it actually been on behalf of the students in the province of Ontario?

We've been asking you for weeks now—for weeks—to get this thing moving, to get this two-tiered disaster out of the way. So when can we expect the students to be back in the classroom, Minister?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Be seated, please. Thank you. Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I couldn't quite discern the answer, so let's go over this again. A week ago Friday, I asked the Education Relations Commission for their advice. They consulted with everybody involved. I received that advice this morning. Within an hour of receiving that advice, I have informed the Legislature that we will table back-to-work legislation this afternoon. I have asked the opposition parties for their co-operation to give unanimous consent to passing second and third reading this afternoon so that we can get the kids back in the classroom.

It's over to you folks. You get to decide how—

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** You get to decide—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question.

## HYDRO ONE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Minister of Energy. Today, the Ombudsman released his scathing report into the billing practices at Hydro One. There's Rebecca Carter, who received bills despite her house having burned down. There's Shannon Lebrun, who wasn't billed for over a year and then came home to find her power cut off. There's Alan Skeoch, whose bank

account was raided for \$11,000 by Hydro One to make up for two years of their mistaken bills.

To say the least, the government should be embarrassed for its lack of action and for its gross mismanagement of this file. I say to the minister, will you apologize to the people of Ontario and the tens of thousands of people that you ripped off and resign today?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** First, I'd like to thank the Ombudsman and his team for his comprehensive and thorough report and recommendations—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Others will be cut off quite quickly, too.

Please finish.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** As a result of a new IT billing system, an unacceptable number of Hydro One's customers, over an extended period of time, received an unacceptable level of service. The CEO of Hydro One and the government have apologized to those impacted. While we know that Hydro One has been working hard to resolve the issues—Hydro One has outlined that work in detail—further work and remediation are still required.

I have therefore asked the chair of Hydro One, David Denison, to report back to me within 40 days with a detailed action plan describing how Hydro One can further address the recommendations in the Ombudsman's report. I'll say more in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the Minister of Energy. Minister, the Ombudsman revealed that the billing errors cost Hydro One, and therefore the Ontario ratepayer, \$88.3 million. But not to worry, Minister. You could get most of that back if Garrison Petawawa in my riding were to pay the \$50.7-million bill it received in error or if the Beaver Valley Ski Club paid the incorrect \$37-million bill it received.

Minister, you're the minister responsible for Hydro One. Throughout this entire fiasco, you have been asleep at the switch. It is time that you were unplugged. Will you take responsibility today and resign?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you. I am going to invoke my rule: Those that decide to have the last laugh when I'm standing will be named.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Hydro One's commitment to customer service will go beyond focusing and stabilizing the IT billing system, which is now well in hand. It will focus on a cultural change and continuous improvement.

Moving forward with a broadened ownership will make a better company to serve Ontario ratepayers and will unlock investments in infrastructure. The newly appointed chair of Hydro One, David Denison, is overseeing a process to select the CEO and several other senior managers.

*Interjection.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Prince Edward—Hastings: second time.  
1050

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Additionally, the chair and the Ministry of Energy are in the process of restructuring the board of directors. This approach will create a better company that will offer more efficiency and better serve the interests of Ontario and the customers of Hydro One.

And no, I will not resign.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Back to the minister: When there's nothing else left, it's "Resort to talking points." I can only imagine how long this problem would continue if my colleague—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Transportation.

Please finish.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** I can only imagine how long this would have continued if my colleague from Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington hadn't asked the Ombudsman to investigate Hydro One. In the future, the Ombudsman or any other officer of the Legislature won't be able to investigate Hydro One because your budget bill will remove that oversight.

Minister, that is anything but transparent. Will you commit today to removing all references to Hydro One from the budget until a much more thorough study of this systemic problem can be completed?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The budget bill does have provisions, if passed, that require Hydro One to create an internal ombudsperson to protect consumers and ensure fairness. We have retained former Auditor General—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We've retained the former federal Auditor General of Canada, Mr. Denis Desautels, to oversee the process to ensure it is established with transparency and accountability.

We've also established a customer service advisory panel as an independent body to recommend service commitments across all levels of the organization. The members include a university president, a well-known consumer advocate, a former Ontario deputy minister, the CEO of Credit Canada Debt Solutions and the former chief of the Saugeen Ojibway First Nation.

I've asked Hydro One's board to work closely with Mr. Desautels and the advisory—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

change in a generation, and not a single Ontarian voted for it. Now the Premier is trying to rush her Hydro One fire sale through without even consulting people and without even giving them a say.

Will the Premier take Hydro One out of the budget bill so Ontarians can have their say on her sell-off?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** What the leader of the third party is asking is whether we will take our investment in transportation and transit infrastructure out of the budget. We actually will not do that because we know how important those investments are. The leader of the third party knows that we put it in our budget. We ran, in our platform, on a policy of investing in infrastructure, because there's not a community in this province that doesn't need investment, whether it's roads and bridges in our rural and small towns and in the north or whether it's transit in our urban communities. All of those communities need investment. That has been a cornerstone of our economic plan. So, no, we're not going to take that out of the budget.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians want their say on the Premier's plan to sell off their Hydro One. Speaker, 451 people applied to present to the finance committee, but less than a quarter have been able to speak. Hundreds more wanted to present but couldn't because the Premier kept the committee on lockdown here in Toronto.

Taking Hydro One out of the budget bill is a very reasonable request. The Premier can pass her budget, flawed though it is, and Ontarians can actually have a say on the sell-off of their public utility, Hydro One.

Will the Premier make her Hydro One sell-off a separate bill and hold hearings across Ontario so that people can have their say on what happens to their Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm very pleased that there was the opportunity for people to come and speak to the budget bill. I know that there were dozens of people who had that opportunity, and I just want to draw on some of that material.

Mary-Frances Turner, regional municipality of York, said: "From the perspective of transit and transportation investment, this budget continues a long-awaited investment in public transit. The \$16 billion in dedicated funds that are going to be made available for transportation and other critical infrastructure across the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, through the Move Ontario Forward plan, will have enormous beneficial impacts on growth, sustainability and the livability of this region for decades to come." That was Mary-Frances Turner from the regional municipality of York.

Annette Verschuren, NRStor: "I think the redistribution of capital and getting capital to work in favour of Ontarians is really critical for this committee to consider. Many times in my career, we've had to reallocate capital to places that needed it"—

## PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Selling off Hydro One is the most radical policy

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Burying the sell-off of Hydro One in an omnibus budget bill is just the wrong thing to do. Ramming through a Stephen-Harper-style omnibus budget with only four days of hearings is the wrong thing to do. That's not enough time to debate the biggest change in public policy in Ontario in a generation, nor does it give people a chance to actually have their say.

Will this Premier take her foot off the gas, listen to Ontarians and take Hydro One out of the budget bill so that it can have full and proper scrutiny and debate across this province?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you. Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The fact is that we put in place six days of hearings, which is far above the average, and the fact is—

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The third party says that it's four days. Yes, it's four days of hearings and two days of clause-by-clause. Mr. Speaker, I guess when they were in office and had one day of hearings it was just clause-by-clause. Nobody would have been able to depute.

Let's hear what the Cement Association of Canada says, because Steve Morrissey had a comment to the committee: "The billions of dollars invested in infrastructure are having a noticeable effect on the average age of the province's infrastructure and on the lives of the people of Ontario. These investments are helping transform the province while also enhancing competitiveness, which is crucial in Ontario today. We also applaud the government's decision to expand the Moving Ontario Forward plan to \$31.5 billion. The investments in public transit, such as the GO Transit expansion, which is helping to connect communities in Toronto and Kitchener-Waterloo and Ottawa, and many other public transit investments are helping us to move within our communities."

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians have been packing town hall meetings. They have been signing petitions. They have been on the lawn of Queen's Park. They have been sending letters and emails to Liberal MPPs. They are sending a message that they cannot afford to pay the price for selling Hydro One. Ontarians are the owners of Hydro One, and they deserve to be heard.

Will this Premier do the right thing, separate her Hydro One scheme, put it into its own bill, and actually consult with the people of Ontario who own Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** When the leader of the third party brings those people together in her meetings around the province, I wonder if she tells the people in that room that they will continue to own 40% of Hydro

One. I wonder if she tells them that the way the price of electricity is set now by the Ontario Energy Board is the way that it will be set after this change. I wonder if she tells them that the regulatory controls that are in place now will stay in place, and that they will continue to have control of the board. I wonder if she tells them that.

And then I wonder if she makes it clear to them that the reason we are doing this is so that we can invest in the transit and transportation infrastructure in their communities, in every community around this province. I wonder if that is part of her speaking note.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians are sending a very clear message: Stop the sale of Hydro One. Selling Hydro One will mean giving up strategic control of our electricity system. It is this control that allows us to make decisions that are in the best interests of all of the people of Ontario, not just some shareholders.

Selling Hydro One will mean higher hydro rates for Ontarians—Ontarians who already pay some of the highest hydro bills in the country.

New Democrats are proposing a very constructive way forward: Remove Hydro One from this Harper-style omnibus budget bill. Let the sell-off stand on its own. Give people a say. Will the Premier sever Hydro One from her omnibus budget bill today?

1100

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party knows full well that the provisions we put in the budget bill are an integral part of the budget. We've made it clear that investing in transit is a core pillar of our economic plan, going forward, and we ran on a plan to review the assets that are owned by the people of Ontario and maximize those assets in order to be able to invest in the assets that are needed for the future and to create jobs in the interim. That is what we are doing.

The leader of the third party is asking that we remove those provisions, that we remove the ability to invest in transit and transportation infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to do that, because Ontario's economy needs those investments.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, people expect this kind of undemocratic behaviour from Stephen Harper. They deserve better from their Premier, especially after she promised to lead the most open and transparent government in all of Canada.

Selling Hydro One is a big deal, Speaker. Once it is gone, it's gone forever. Bills will only go up. We will lose control of a strategic asset that supports jobs, energy efficiency and conservation. Ontarians deserve better—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I apologize for the interruption. I'm dealing with people on both sides having conversations.

Thank you. Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians deserve better than ramming the budget through the Legislature in a Harper-style omnibus budget bill.



Will this Premier do the right thing by the people of Ontario and sever Hydro One out of her omnibus budget bill today?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Speaker, the opposition continues to attribute to this initiative the fact that rates will potentially go up. Before committee last week, the CEO of the Ontario Energy Board, Rosemarie Leclair, made this statement: The OEB public hearing process is rigorous and requires utilities to provide comprehensive business plans. "Proposals are examined and challenged in an open, public and transparent process which includes the active participation of ratepayer representatives as well as other stakeholders. In fact, the OEB is one of few energy regulators that provide significant funding to ensure that the voices of those impacted by our decisions are represented effectively in our proceedings."

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington will withdraw.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Carry on.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the record continually shows that the OEB is reducing in a significant way the rates—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

#### RING OF FIRE

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** My question is for the Premier. In his first opportunity to travel as PC leader, Patrick Brown not only chose to go to northern Ontario; he chose the Ring of Fire. I saw the excitement in his eyes. He gets it. He saw the huge potential in the Ring of Fire—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Order. My statement still holds, on all sides.

Finish, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** He saw the huge potential in the Ring of Fire: an opportunity of a lifetime to create jobs and help turn Ontario's economy around. But what he didn't see were the hundreds of miners who used to work at the base camp. They're all gone. They're down to a half-dozen workers, all because this government has done nothing—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

Let's put it to the test: It stops now.

Wrap up, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** We can tell this hit a nerve, because they've done nothing for seven years.

Patrick Brown wants the Ring of Fire to be at the centre of the economic plan for Ontario. Premier, why is it that Patrick Brown spent more time in his first two weeks on the job in the Ring of Fire than you have—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, Mr. Speaker, when I was paddling the Attawapiskat River in the Ring of Fire area two years ago, I actually didn't notice any members of the opposition on the river with me.

When I have travelled repeatedly to the north and met with First Nations, when I flew to Webequie and met with the community and talked about the training opportunities that are now in place so that people in Webequie could be part of the development of the Ring of Fire, I actually didn't hear a comment from the Leader of the Opposition. When we were working to put together a framework agreement with the Mattawa First Nations, when we were working to put together—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Dufferin—Caledon: second time.

Please finish.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —the development corporation to ensure that First Nations and business and the provincial government were together. But, Mr. Speaker, where was Patrick Brown when he was the MP—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Thank you.

Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Well, Maclean's magazine called your strategy a "hodgepodge of hope, pray and blame Ottawa." That's your answer for everything: Blame Ottawa. But you haven't even made an application for a Ring of Fire—you're blaming them in advance, Premier. Quit pointing your fingers and actually get something done.

Our leader, Patrick Brown, has already travelled to the Ring of Fire. He got his hands covered in nickel and chromite dust. He looked into the eyes of the people left there, and he gave them hope. Seven years have passed—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Final wrap-up part of the question.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Seven years have passed since the discovery of the Ring of Fire. Premier, how many more years have to pass before you actually do anything?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'd be happy to brief Mr. Brown on how you get from Pickle Lake into the Attawapiskat River and how you can actually canoe into the Ring of Fire area. I'd be happy to brief him on that.

I hope now that he is a provincial representative—he's not actually yet, but now that he's with the provincial government—he will call on Ottawa to match the \$1 billion that we have put up to actually build the infrastructure, because if the member opposite is not aware, what is really needed is infrastructure. It's extremely important that we build infrastructure to allow the Ring

of Fire to be developed. That's why we've committed \$1 billion. That's why we've been working with the First Nations to make sure—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Nipissing.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —that we can get that infrastructure built and the commitment of \$1 billion—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** In case you didn't hear, the member from Nipissing, come to order, please. You asked the question.

The member from Prince Edward–Hastings, warning. You are warned.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The commitment of \$1 billion to that infrastructure goes way beyond talk and way into action. That's what we need from the federal government as well.

## HYDRO ONE

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. This morning, Ontario's independent Ombudsman released his findings into the 10,000-plus complaints around the billing practices of Hydro One—10,000 plus, Speaker—the most of any investigation to date. In his interim report, the Ombudsman pointed out that inquiries from his office around some of the most egregious of these billings for Hydro One customers were already getting action, what the Ombudsman calls his “moral suasion.”

With the Premier's promises of gold at the end of the rainbow for investors and accelerated timelines by this government around the sale of Hydro One, should Ontarians expect that the largest investigation ever undertaken by an independent officer of the Legislature will just be shelved?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

1110

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I've indicated earlier today that we take this report very seriously. We thank the Ombudsman for his extensive report. We are going beyond what has already happened. I've asked the new chair of Hydro One, David Denison, to report back to me within 40 days with a detailed action plan describing how Hydro One can further address the recommendations in the Ombudsman's report.

As well, Mr. Denison is overseeing a process to select a CEO and several other senior managers. Additionally, the chair and the Minister of Energy are in the process of restructuring the board of directors.

Mr. Speaker, we're changing the culture in Hydro One. Moving forward, it's going to be efficient, it's going to be a growth company and it's going to be benefiting the people of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Again to the Premier: Speaker, when the Premier was down in the States pitching the

sale of Hydro One, she knew the Ombudsman's report was soon to be tabled. Were prospective investors told about the Ombudsman's investigation, or did the Premier simply say, “Don't worry. We're writing the Ombudsman out of the picture, and if you bank on us, that report, with its 10,000-plus complaints, just goes away”?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Speaker, as we know, the legislation contemplates an embedded ombudsman being appointed for Hydro One. We have retained former federal Auditor General Mr. Denis Desautels to oversee the process, to ensure it is established with transparency and accountability. Mr. Desautels, a man of tremendous credibility and experience as Auditor General of Canada, is overseeing the process for the IPO and is also overseeing the appointment of an embedded ombudsman to ensure that it is in place with transparency and accountability.

## GO TRANSIT

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation. As the member for Halton, and as a daily commuter, I often hear about how important public transit is to those living in my community. Every weekday, GO Transit has 18 daily trips and accommodates roughly 30,000 passengers on the Milton line, giving it the second-highest ridership of the GO train lines on the network.

As part of budget 2015, our government included \$13.5 billion in improvements across the GO Transit network. This will lay the foundation for regional express rail.

This is great news, but those living in my community want to know exactly how these new investments will benefit them. Can the minister please tell members of this House how these new investments will help those living in Halton region?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank the member from Halton for her question and for the advocacy that she provides on a regular basis for her community.

She is quite correct: Our government is making a \$13.5-billion investment to improve the GO Transit network, which will help increase transit ridership and reduce travel times. This will result in more than a doubling of peak service and a quadrupling of off-peak service compared to today and reduced journey times for some cross-region transit trips by as much as 50%.

The Milton corridor itself will have service every 15 minutes or better during the morning and afternoon peak travel periods, and within the next five years the number of weekly trips on the Milton corridor will grow from 90 to more than 100.

Metrolinx will continue to work very closely with our government and CP, who owns a portion of the track, to find ways to increase and improve service for those living in Halton region.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I want to thank the minister for his response and his efforts. I'm glad to hear that those living in Halton can expect to see increased



GO rail service through the Moving Ontario Forward plan.

My constituents want to know that our government is continuing to make critical investments in transit and transportation that will help keep my community moving forward.

In fact, since 2003, Ontario has committed more than \$278 million to improve transit in Halton, including \$5.1 million in Milton.

But one concern that I continue to hear from my constituents, and experience personally as a transit rider, relates to parking at the Milton GO station. Some GO riders are concerned that they aren't able to find a space to park in the morning. Can the minister please tell members of this House what our government is doing to help address these concerns?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to thank that member for her question. We know that many of those who commute on GO Transit rely on parking at GO stations. That's why we've built over 3,500 spaces along the Milton line for communities like Mississauga and in Milton itself over the last 10 years, including 670 spaces in Milton alone. Metrolinx's parking plan has also identified the potential for an additional 600 to 800 spaces at the Milton GO station, and we are undertaking feasibility studies to determine how those could be accommodated.

In the meantime, we're also moving forward with the GO Connect pilot project. Led by Milton Transit, this project provides an innovative way to get to and from the Milton GO station through the use of a dial-a-ride Web and mobile app, the first application of its kind in North America.

We're committed to working with municipal partners like Milton Transit to address local needs and get people moving across our region.

#### TVO DOCUMENTARY

**Mr. Steve Clark:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, for months you've refused to hold anyone accountable for the allegations of bribery in the Sudbury by-election. Now you want to turn out the lights on a TVO documentary. Taxpayers spent over \$114,000 for your infomercial that you want to shut down. It's an indictment to you and your government that even when trying to film a documentary, the footage looks more like a crime drama. You personally invited the director to film you in Sudbury, and it's obvious there's something in that footage that you don't want to see the light of day.

Will you stop acting like a censor and direct TVO to air this documentary, and turn over the raw footage to the OPP?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I have said publicly, we worked closely with the producer to determine what the parameters or the scope of the film would be. It was to be a behind-the-scenes look at the budget. Over the course of the filming, there was a discussion about the scope of the film. We shared these concerns with the producer; that was our sole contact for the project, not TVO.

There was always a clear understanding that we wouldn't have editorial control; that was understood. I have not seen any of the footage. I've said that publicly; that is true. I've never seen any of the footage. We're really still hoping that the film can happen. Remember—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. That's enough.

Please finish.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The reason that I and we agreed to this was that there is a film that was made under the Bill Davis era—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Member from Lanark: second time.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—explaining how government works. That really did need to be updated. I hope that it will still go ahead.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Back to the Premier. Once again, the Premier's story is, "There's nothing to see here, folks." The problem is that every time you say that, the OPP and the Chief Electoral Officer think differently. If there's truly nothing to hide, then prove it: Let's all have a look at the movie. I'll even buy the popcorn, Premier.

Over the weekend you said, Premier, that you hope the film will be aired. If that's the case, I expect you to show some accountability by signing the release forms after question period. Will you sign those forms, or will you force the OPP investigators to sign yet another warrant for this scandal?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Once again, I will just say that we agreed to a scope of the film. I agreed to do this film because I thought there needed to be an update on a film that had been made in the Bill Davis era.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke is warned. The member from Dufferin–Caledon is warned.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It could be now if you want.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** We're hoping that the film will be aired. There was a discussion about the scope of the film. My understanding up until this became public was that the film was going ahead, that we were going to be able to. I have not seen the footage, and I hope that we'll still be able to see it aired.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the education Premier. Speaker, under this Liberal government and a Premier who dubbed herself a negotiator, our schools have been thrown into chaos. In an effort to save a few bucks to pay off their scandals, the Liberals cut \$250 million from education over 2014-15 and diminished

special education funding across Ontario—and we know there's more to come.

1120

Students and families are paying the price for this government's short-sighted cuts to education. Will the Premier admit that her reckless cuts to the education system have thrown our schools into chaos?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me first say that this is a question from a member of a party that I would have thought believed in the collective bargaining process, as a start. Certainly, the NDP used to believe in the collective bargaining process.

We worked with our partners to put a collective bargaining process in place. That collective bargaining process has unfolded as it has. As the Minister of Education said today, we have just received the advice from the Education Relations Commission. I would just say that I hope, if there is concern in the third party for the students, that the third party will be supporting our legislation, which would get kids back to school as quickly as possible.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Back to the Premier. We learned that central table negotiations with OSSTF have broken down. The Premier and her minister have not been successful in any level of negotiation with any board under this two-tiered system they so proudly introduced not long ago. Is this the new direction for relationships with teachers that the Premier espoused as a leadership candidate?

To make matters worse—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy House leader: second time.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** —it appears the Liberal government is abandoning its commitment to keep class sizes manageable, directly impacting learning conditions for our students.

Why is this government forcing students and families to pay the price for their mismanagement of the education portfolio in this province?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let's just talk about what we've been able to do in the last number of years for students in this province and for the education system, but reminding the member opposite that the process that is in place right now is one that was developed in partnership with the education sector, with the boards, with the unions, with the federations, because we all knew that there needed to be a new process and that it needed to have a provincial and a local component. That process is in place, and it is the first time the process has been used. There's no doubt that it has been a tough collective bargaining process, but it is a process that everyone agreed to.

The fact is that our 2015 budget will protect the gains that we've made in education: \$120 million over three years to create thousands of child care spaces, \$40 million in technology and innovation in classrooms from K to 12, Experience Ontario, which will invest \$20 million

over three years to help graduating high school students get experience—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## HOME CARE

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is for the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. In my time as a care coordinator for a CCAC, I often heard from my patients their desire to receive quality care within the comfort of their own homes and communities rather than in hospitals or in long-term-care homes. Helping more people receive care quickly and close to home, not only in my riding of Cambridge but across the province, is essential to providing Ontarians with the highest possible quality of care in the most comfortable and familiar setting for them.

Currently, home care is provided to over 600,000 Ontarians per year while community support services assist an additional 1.46 million, many of whom are seniors. Can the minister please inform the House what this government is doing to further improve our home and community care services throughout the province?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I want to say thank you to the member from Cambridge for this question. Since 2003, our government has more than doubled the funding provided for home and community services. In fact, one of the four pillars in our government's Patients First action plan outlines our goal of improving these services with a commitment to delivering better coordinated and integrated care within communities closer to home.

Building on this commitment, earlier this month I announced our Patients First: A Roadmap to Strengthen Home and Community Care. It's the first phase in our plan to transform the way we deliver care at home and in the community. With a 2015 budget commitment of an additional \$750 million over three years, our government has put forth a road map for the future of home and community care. In fact, our plan endorses all of the recommendations outlined in Bringing Care Home, a report published by the provincial expert panel led by Dr. Gail Donner.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Care coordinators, patients and families in my community of Cambridge will be pleased to know about our government's plan to improve home and community care. It certainly was improved over my years there. Our loved ones with needs that can be reasonably met within their homes or communities will receive support to do so, and with high-quality and consistent care across the province.

We know that care at home and in the community often goes well beyond the patient themselves. There's often a circle of family, friends and other caregivers involved. It's important that patients and their caregivers have control over what this care looks like and that we recognize the unique situations of patients across the province.



Speaker, can the minister let this House know about other initiatives in the community and home care sector that meet the needs of patients and their caregivers alike?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Mr. Speaker, included in our \$750-million investment to improve access and expand services for home and community care, we are funding an additional 80,000 hours of nursing care. We're expanding supports for family caregivers and personal support workers. We're increasing choice for patients and their families regarding the palliative and end-of-life care they receive.

Our government recognizes the vastly different needs of people across the province and will provide patients with greater choice and greater control to ensure that care plans are as individualized as possible. That's why we're piloting different approaches such as self-directed funding, to allow clients and their families greater autonomy over the care they receive. Our plan puts patients and their caregivers at the absolute centre of our system. It not only gives them the support they need in achieving the highest quality of care that they deserve; it allows them a greater say in what that care should look like.

#### SMOKING CESSATION

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** To the Premier: My family's story is no different than thousands of other families here in Ontario. We are a family of smokers. It has been generational. My parents smoked. My brothers and sisters smoked. My children smoke. This addiction is not just generational; it's also cultural.

Like most smokers, we've tried gums and patches, and they seldom work. But since I've started using a vaporizer, I've cut back significantly, and so has my family. It has meant that we can spend more time with our grandsons. It has meant that, for the first time in generations, we might end this trend. It means my grandsons may not grow up in a family of smokers.

Premier, your government is making a tragic mistake. Will you please reconsider and spend more time investigating vaporizers before you rush to a decision with schedule 3 of Bill 45 that will prevent people like myself and my family and thousands of others from quitting tobacco once and for all?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I thank the member opposite for his question. But I really hope he has read Bill 45. I know he sat on the committee. If he fully understood the bill, he would know that we're not banning electronic cigarettes. All we are doing is regulating electronic cigarettes to make sure that we balance the potential benefits, which we recognize, against the potential risks. But it continues to be perfectly legal for adults.

I'm sure the member opposite agrees that we shouldn't have 16-year-olds being able to buy an e-cigarette or able to smoke inside a classroom. That is what we are doing. All we are doing is regulating. There is nothing in the regulation that stops a potential smoker from choosing to use an electronic cigarette if that's what they want to do.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** I have read the bill, and I did attend the committee hearings—all.

Premier, there are only two groups that benefit from you passing schedule 3—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order, please. Thank you.

Please finish your question.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Premier, there are only two groups that benefit from you passing schedule 3 of Bill 45, and it's not children or the general public. Two of the most vocal opponents, and the two groups set to gain the most from this bill, are big tobacco and big pharma. By demonizing vaporizers, you are helping tobacco companies regain a market share that has been devastated by vaporizers. You're also allowing pharmaceutical companies to continue to market cessation products over the counter that are proven less effective than vaporizers.

Premier, how can it be that myself and others who are addicted to cigarettes are fighting big tobacco while you and your government are actively protecting and defending big tobacco?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Mr. Speaker, I believe this government's commitment to anti-smoking is the gold standard. So I don't know where he's coming from when he says that we are supporting big tobacco.

1130

On the issue of schedule 3, on the issue of electronic cigarettes, if you've read Bill 45, clearly, the way we have drafted Bill 45 is to make it very flexible. Should it ever come to pass that Health Canada says that e-cigarettes are a legitimate cessation device, we have regulations in place that would actually allow us to very quickly change regulations and ensure that it's treated exactly the same as any other cessation device.

In the interim, while we await better evidence, all we are doing is regulating electronic cigarettes. You can continue to use them.

#### LABOUR DISPUTE

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Since 2013, the workers at Crown Holdings, Inc. have walked the picket line in an attempt to stop a steep rollback of their pensions, their benefits and their wages—21 months now, two winters. The government promised an industrial inquiry, but so far there has been no action. This is an untenable situation and the government should be stepping up to the plate. Will this government finally take some action on this long-standing dispute?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the member for the very important question.

We have indeed acted on this, and it's a very rare step that we've taken. In the province of Ontario, over 97% of collective agreements are reached at the table. In this case, we have an outlier, a very exceptional circumstance.

The reason that we took the unusual step of appointing the Industrial Inquiry Commissioner was to make sure that we got to the bottom of this, to make sure that we understood exactly what had transpired over this period of time to allow this to go on for so long without an agreement. I meet on a regular basis with Mr. Mort Mitchnick, a very well respected individual who has a huge background in the field of labour relations law. He will be reporting back his findings to me in the very near future.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sandra Horwath:** Well, Speaker, time is a-tickin'.

People should be able to go to work and be paid a fair wage and not have to walk a picket line for nearly two years in the province of Ontario. People should not have to live on strike pay for two years and have to appeal to their union to make a mortgage payment.

It's time for the Premier and the government of Ontario to stop looking the other way. Will this Premier, will this government, force binding arbitration in the Crown Holdings situation and ensure that all of those who are now out on the picket line will be able to return to work with a fair deal?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Our government's preference is always to encourage the parties to resolve whatever differences they have at the bargaining table. If they need assistance with that, we've got excellent arbitrators, excellent mediators that we bring to the table to ensure that every single avenue is explored in search of that agreement.

Speaker, this morning I met with some of the steelworkers in front of my office from Crown Metal. I had a very good conversation with them, a very amiable conversation. I understand the frustration level. I committed to them that we would get to the bottom of this and we would find a resolution that suits their needs and their desires.

## EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** My question is for the Minister of Labour. Minister, a local constituent from my riding of Brampton-Springdale just landed her very first job at a grocery store. She is very excited but at the same time nervous. She's afraid she might not understand what she's entitled to, that she won't get breaks when working long-hour shifts or overtime pay when she's asked to stay late.

Minister, we know the ministry requires all employers across the province to inform their employees about the

Employment Standards Act. Usually, this is done by posting a copy of the employment standards poster somewhere accessible in the workplace, outlining employee rights including overtime, minimum wage, breaks, vacation pay, and public holidays, among others outlined in the ESA.

My question for the minister: How can it be assured that current employees and new hires such as my constituent are aware of their rights, and what steps has your ministry put into place to ensure that employees have access to information about their ESA rights?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you to the honourable member from Brampton-Springdale for what I think is a very, very important question.

Speaker, this government works hard to ensure that all Ontarians are treated with the dignity and the respect they deserve at work. In order to do that, to assist in that, last fall we passed the Stronger Workplaces for a Stronger Economy Act. It introduced two very important changes to the Employment Standards Act.

As of May 20, Ontario law now requires employers to distribute copies of the latest version of the employment standards poster to all employees by June 19 this year. For new hires, such as your constituent that the honourable member mentioned, this information must be provided to them as a new employee within 30 days of their hiring.

It's not sufficient anymore for employers to simply post this information in the workplace. Employment standards officers now have the authority to require employers to conduct a self-audit. Any failure to post and distribute will be met with enforcement.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Back to the Minister of Labour, whom I'd like to thank for his reply and for addressing this important issue before the House today.

These new requirements under the ESA will help employees further understand their basic workplace rights. However, in my riding of Brampton-Springdale there's a large ethnic community, and I'm worried that many of my constituents may have difficulty reading and understanding their basic rights listed on the poster.

Mr. Speaker, through you to the minister: What steps has the ministry taken to ensure that all employees, regardless of ethnicity or language, will be able to read and understand their rights under the ESA, and where can employers and employees gain access to the latest version of the poster?

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** We all know, I think, in this House that knowledge is power, and people who know their rights can actually stand up for those rights.

To answer the question from the honourable member, the requirement for the new version of the ESA poster outlines that it must be displayed in English, unless the majority of the employees speak another common language. If that's the case, as it may be in this example, the employer is then required to post a translated copy of the poster right next to the English version. The ESA poster must also be provided in other languages if an employee



requests a translation. These translated versions are available from the Ministry of Labour. Right now, the poster is available in English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai and Urdu.

The poster can be downloaded free of charge. It's printed on a standard 8.5-by-11 piece of paper. That makes it very simple for employers to distribute to their staff.

Helping employees and employers understand their workplace rights and responsibilities is part—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.  
New question.

#### ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** A question to the Minister of Energy: Rex Ge is the kind of person we want to see more of in the province of Ontario. He's a Chinese Canadian immigrant who came to this country to work hard, provide for his family and give back to the new country he loves. He opened up a greenhouse in Smithville, Ontario. It's been running for 15 years. This January, he visited his ailing parents in China and he missed a bill for \$362. Twenty-nine days later, the utility, Niagara Peninsula Energy, cut the cord. They disconnected his power. The consequences were entirely predictable. The boiler shut down, the pipes burst and his entire crop in the greenhouse was wiped out. The cost to him: \$150,000.

Minister, would you agree with me that Niagara Peninsula Energy went way, way, way too far and they owe Mr. Ge compensation for the destruction of his livelihood?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I appreciate the question from the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook and appreciate that he has been here regularly. I'm pleased to receive a question from him.

The issue he raises brings to question the role of the regulator, the Ontario Energy Board. We have, I think, something like five million electricity customers in Ontario, and they do need a place to go with their complaints. The Ontario Energy Board has a report card, and they do follow up. In fact, the member brought this to my attention, and his constituent has followed the appropriate process, bringing the issue to the attention of the Ontario Energy Board, the independent regulator with the mandate to protect Ontario ratepayers.

I understand that the Ontario Energy Board has filed a complaint with the local utility and is currently awaiting their response. There is accountability, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I thank the minister, and you're right: We did, through my office, launch a formal complaint with the Ontario Energy Board on behalf of Mr. Ge. But I think we can go a step further. I've known you, Minister, for a long time. I know that, in your heart, you know the company did wrong. It was extraordinarily damaging: \$150,000 in losses for a \$362 bill. To boot, Mr. Ge had never missed a single payment. He paid his bills and he paid them on time. Not only was this a massive screw-up; it was cruel.

You play a unique role. You occupy, as Theodore Roosevelt said, the bully pulpit. You are the minister. You carry a lot of weight. I know it's with the OEB and the local utility, but, Minister, will you join me? Tell Niagara Peninsula Energy to give their heads a shake, do the right thing and pay Mr. Ge for his damages.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, I definitely will join him on this particular file. It is apparently a very significant injustice that has happened in this particular case. I know that the Ontario Energy Board is now actually working with the utility to try to resolve this particular issue. Certainly any information that I have I will share with the member, and I will work with the member to try to bring this to a positive resolution.

#### JOB CREATION

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** To the Premier: Last year, on the eve of an election, the Premier showed up in Waterloo to announce an agreement to give \$120 million to OpenText to create 1,200 jobs. Now we see that OpenText will be cutting 5% of its workforce, and it claims that the job cuts are in line with the agreement with the Liberal government.

Premier, your own press release from the announcement states that "support is contingent on the company meeting ... job targets." Since you claim to be committed to openness and transparency, will you make that agreement public so that Ontarians can judge whether or not the 1,200 jobs you took credit for creating are actually going to be created?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I'm really surprised that a member from the Kitchener community would get up and criticize the investment that we've made with OpenText to create 1,200 very important high-tech jobs and bring \$2 billion of investment into this province that was on its way elsewhere. What OpenText is doing is creating an R&D hub here in Ontario instead of somewhere else in the world so that those 1,200 high-tech jobs will be here in Ontario, in your community, and you are getting up to criticize that investment.

I'm proud of that investment, I'm proud of the 1,200 jobs we're creating in Kitchener, and I'm proud of the \$2 billion that we're bringing into our economy. You should be too.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

There being no deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1143 to 1300.*

#### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** On the 10th anniversary of the passing of Sabrina's Law, in the gallery we have parents Sara and Mike Shannon, Laurie Harada, Beatrice Povalo,

Chris Holcroft and Gabrielle Hadden. Welcome to the Legislature, and congratulations.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Mr. John Fraser:** In the gallery here today are Emile and Beth Therien from my riding of Ottawa South. I'll have a few more things to say in a member's statement, and I'd like to welcome them here. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome. Further introductions?

**Miss Monique Taylor:** This morning I introduced the Le Donne family and I made an error when I introduced Bridget's friend; it's Jacob Smal. I'd just like to welcome you to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Welcome.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### SERVICE CLUBS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** I raise today to talk about my recent private member's resolution that asked the Minister of Finance to task a committee of this Legislature to fully investigate the challenges facing service clubs in Ontario. I've raised this issue many, many times, as you know, Mr. Speaker. In February, this House passed my private member's resolution, and I thank all members for that. I have received all-party support for the establishment of this committee, but nothing has happened. It has been three months since the government supported my resolution, yet I've heard nothing.

To further my effort, today I will be officially launching a petition to encourage immediate action. I remind this government that service clubs are the backbone of our province, providing social and economic benefits to the communities they serve. Service club members best understand their communities' intrinsic values and needs, and fill the fiscal holes that government and other agencies cannot. Yet service clubs continue to deal with a number of provincial issues and challenges that are hindering their everyday operations.

Once again, I encourage this government to give service clubs the support they deserve. It's time to task a committee of this Legislature to investigate the problems that are hindering service clubs from doing the good work they do in our communities across the province, day in and day out. There is no downside to doing this. There are a number of very simple provincial issues that look simple on the surface but are complex. They need the input of legislators and we need to have service clubs come here to Queen's Park and give testimony. We need to help them out. They help us out every day, and we need to help them out.

### ESSEX MEMORIAL HONOUR WALL

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I had the enormous honour yesterday to take part in the unveiling of the Essex

Memorial Honour Wall, which is inscribed with the names of 1,405 local RAF and RCAF veterans from Essex county. The monument stands as a complementary backdrop to the Essex Memorial Spitfire replica aircraft erected as a tribute to the late Jerry Billing, a local legend and World War II Spitfire ace.

Jerry's call sign was Black Hawk. As we unveiled the monument, a magnificent black hawk soared above the thousands of people who were in attendance yesterday. It was quite spectacular, and we knew that Jerry was among us.

My wife Jenny and I joined nearly 1,000 people yesterday to pay tribute to our veterans. It was an amazing display of community spirit, none of which could have been or would have been possible without the amazing efforts put forward by the Essex Memorial Spitfire Committee. I want to acknowledge the efforts of Karen Billing, Monica Totten, Erik Billing, Bob Swaddling, Joe Gibson, Bill Reilly, Todd Porter, Randy Voakes, Al Timmins, Gerry Schinkel, Michael Beale, Michael Kohuch and Suzanne Allison. The committee or, as they are now affectionately known, the squadron, are to be commended for their efforts on preserving the memories of so many who gave so much for our country.

"Per ardua ad astra" is the motto of the Royal Air Force. It means, "Through adversity, to the stars."

To my friends with the Essex Memorial Spitfire Committee, I want to say thank you for aiming for the stars. You've done our community proud.

### EMILE AND BETH THERIEN

**M. John Fraser:** Aujourd'hui, je prends la parole pour souligner le travail accompli par Emile et Beth Therien, deux résidents de ma circonscription d'Ottawa-Sud.

Today, I rise to celebrate the compelling work being done by Emile and Beth Therien, two long-time residents of my riding of Ottawa South. In 2006, the Theriens' daughter, Sarah Beth, passed away suddenly. Despite losing their daughter at the young age of 32, they were able to turn a tragic event into something positive. Having known that Sarah Beth was a passionate supporter of organ and tissue donation, Emile and Beth were determined to see through their daughter's wishes of being an organ donor.

Although she did not meet the criteria to donate, they tirelessly advocated on her behalf so that her organs could be used to help save the lives of others. Through their courageous determination, they were successful, and Sarah Beth Therien became the first organ donor after cardiac death in Canada. Her kidneys gave active, productive life back to two people; her corneas restored full sight to two more.

Since then, Emile and Beth have continued to exhibit leadership in their community. Their advocacy on the issue of organ and tissue donation has already had an extraordinary impact. They have selflessly volunteered their time and work. For these reasons and many more,



they were both recently recognized with the 2014 Trillium Gift of Life Network Champion Award.

J'aimerais remercier Emile, Beth et leur fille, Sarah Beth, pour leur dévouement et leur compassion.

Thank you, Emile and Beth, for the compassion that you and your daughter, Sarah Beth, have selflessly demonstrated.

#### BRUCE GREY MUSIC HALL OF FAME

**Mr. Bill Walker:** There are a lot of talented people in my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. In fact, our musical landscape is so vast that some of my constituents decided the best way to capture it all would be to build it a home, a home for all the history of local talent and artists who make their name in Bruce-Grey.

So it is with great enthusiasm that I rise today to announce the grand opening of the Bruce Grey Music Hall of Fame on June 7 in my hometown of Hepworth. To mark this special occasion, a real horse-mule wagon train caravan will travel to what was originally the Hepworth Country Music Auditorium, founded and built by John Kocher. Now it's home to the Hepworth Shallow Lake Royal Canadian Legion.

The Hepworth auditorium has a long and proud music history, with performances from several famous artists, including Canadian icon the late Stompin' Tom Connors, as well as Whispering Bill Anderson, Leroy Van Dyke and Bobby Bare, both of whom performed in the hall back in 1968. There were also Mel Tillis, Don Gibson, Hank Locklin, Webb Pierce and many more.

It was there that I attended my first country and western concert, featuring Billy Walker, at the age of three, courtesy of my older sisters, Marie, Marj and Bonnie.

Induction into the music hall of fame will be a proud honour for our riding's art and entertainment talents. The first inductees will be announced on June 7 after a concert by local musical performers Rudy and Jean Couture. There will also be a silent auction hosted by Funny Farm newspaper columnist Jim Merriam and a live auction with myself, Jerry Ruth and Durk Devries of Sure-Bid auctions, Pelee Island Music Hall of Fame Commemorative Wine and a fish-fry dinner served by Legion members.

Inductees' names will be showcased on a seven-foot maple cherrywood Epiphone replica guitar, custom-made by Exquisite Wood Designs of Owen Sound and sponsored by Exquisite, 560 CFOS and Country 93 radio.

I'd also like to recognize some of the gentlemen who poured their hearts and souls into this project, creating something that captures our vast pool of talent in art and entertainment and, most importantly, all genres of local music, from the symphony to the blues and country and western, and all entertainers, entertainment writers, and radio and TV personalities who made their mark in Bruce-Grey. They are Bill Murdoch, former MPP, of Bognor Jam Production and Promotion, and fellow music promoter Arnie Clark, who themselves left an indelible mark on our riding with shows such as the Jailhouse

Rock, True Country and Grand Ole Opry Hepworth North, as well as Jim Merriam and Kevin Moyse.

It'll be a great show. I welcome everyone to attend.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to meet with members of the ODSP Action Coalition, a province-wide coalition of advocates tirelessly fighting on behalf of people living with disabilities.

Many people with disabilities depend on ODSP for their survival, but surviving on ODSP is no small feat. Poverty-level benefits have failed to keep up with the ever-increasing cost of food, electricity and rent in Ontario, where a monthly benefit for a single person tops out at \$1,100, while the average bachelor apartment apartment in Toronto is close to \$900.

#### 1310

Due to their disabilities, most ODSP recipients are not able to work full-time, but when their health allows, many try to work part-time, both for the sense of satisfaction it provides and because they desperately need every possible extra dollar to pay for the extra basic costs of living in Ontario.

This October, the Liberal government will cut the Work-Related Benefit for ODSP recipients. They will cut the \$100 monthly benefit that supports people with disabilities to participate in the workforce. This cut will deepen poverty and will create yet another barrier for people with disabilities to participate in the workforce.

As the NDP critic for community and social services, I call on this Premier, Kathleen Wynne, and her Liberal government to reverse this cruel decision and reverse the cut to the Work-Related Benefit for people on ODSP.

#### HUMBER VALLEY VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** The strength of our communities relies to such a great extent on the commitment and hard work of people and volunteers who advocate on behalf of their communities. There are so many examples of that in my community of Etobicoke Centre.

I rise in the House today to speak of such a group of people and the important work they do on behalf of our community. Today I would like to congratulate and thank the volunteers, the members and the board of the Humber Valley Village Residents' Association.

Mr. Speaker, I am speaking not just as their member of provincial Parliament, but as a resident and a member of Humber Valley Village, so I have witnessed first-hand the outstanding efforts of this dedicated and effective organization and their members, and witnessed their positive impact on our community.

Over the course of the past several years, the Humber Valley Village Residents' Association led the opposition to a proposed development in Humbertown plaza that would have altered the character and quality of life in our

community. They held countless consultations, worked with city officials and developers, and raised funds to ensure that they could be effective advocates on behalf of our community. Eventually, they negotiated with the developer for a smaller development.

More recently, they successfully advocated for a site- and area-specific policy to guide future development of the apartment neighbourhood adjacent to Humbertown plaza. That process is under way, and last month, I attended a consultation hosted by the city on this very topic. Members of the association have been, and will be, playing an active role on this as well.

Humber Valley Village Residents' Association is sustained by an extremely dedicated group of volunteers who are devoted to maintaining a vibrant, prosperous and safe community. Today I rise as their MPP and as a resident to say thank you for all you do for Humber Valley Village and all you do for Etobicoke Centre.

### ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** It's my honour and privilege to speak on the passage, 10 years ago next month, of Bill 3, An Act to protect anaphylactic pupils, commonly known as Sabrina's Law. This bill mandates that every school board create and maintain an anaphylaxis policy to protect our children.

Although I recognized them a few minutes ago, I want to mention the parents of Sabrina, Sara and Mike Shannon, who are here at Queen's Park today to help pay tribute to their daughter and the legislation enacted in her memory.

Prior to Sabrina's Law, children in Ontario's school system had no defence against serious allergies that made attending school dangerous for many. After the tragic passing of Sabrina, members from all three parties recognized that we couldn't allow another young child to suffer from anaphylactic shock because their school was ill-prepared to handle those emergency situations.

Helping to pass Sabrina's Law remains one of the highlights of my time here at Queen's Park. I am certain that other MPPs, both current and former, would say the same thing.

We are grateful that former educator and future Speaker MPP Dave Levac from Brant introduced Bill 3 and saw to it that every member understood the importance of this bill. As a result, it received unanimous support from this assembly.

But the greatest accolades, Sara and Mike, belong to you and your lovely daughter Sabrina. I cannot imagine what it is like to lose a child, but through that tragedy, you worked tirelessly to make Ontario's schools, and schools across North America, safer for all children. It is because of your hard work that since the passing of this law, no child in an Ontario school has died as a result of an allergic reaction.

Although you must miss her dearly each and every day, I know that this law stands as a testament to your courage and commitment, and that the legacy of your wonderful daughter Sabrina will be remembered.

### GEMS OF ETOBICOKE-LAKESHORE

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** I'm pleased to be able to share news with the House of an event hosted in my riding last week: the annual Gems of Etobicoke-Lakeshore awards evening. I held this in conjunction with my local MP, Bernard Trotter.

Gems of Etobicoke-Lakeshore recognizes, honours and celebrates local businesses, organizations and community services located within my riding that deliver outstanding services, provide high-quality products and make remarkable contributions to our community.

Community members and residents submitted hundreds of nominations, and the winners were chosen by a panel of local judges in partnership with our Etobicoke-Lakeshore business improvement areas. The categories were for best restaurant, food service, retail business, cultural and recreational organization, service business, community service and best new business.

These nominations reflect the great commitment that local residents have to supporting the services and products uniquely offered in Etobicoke that make our community a must-see destination. And a characteristic that is shared by all of the exemplary nominees is their sense of community spirit, demonstrated through volunteerism and involvement in local events and initiatives.

The Gems of Etobicoke-Lakeshore offer me a wonderful opportunity every year to recognize outstanding businesses and organizations in my riding. These unique small businesses and groups in our neighbourhoods provide incredible service and deserve to be recognized. They are truly gems, and we want to celebrate those who work to make Etobicoke-Lakeshore an even more vibrant place to live, work and play.

Whether in Etobicoke-Lakeshore or elsewhere, let's all remember to shop locally. It's good for our communities, good for the economy and good for Ontario.

### NATIONAL SCHIZOPHRENIA AND PSYCHOSIS AWARENESS DAY

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It's my pleasure to rise today in honour of National Schizophrenia and Psychosis Awareness Day, which occurred yesterday. Every year on May 24, schizophrenia societies across the country encourage Canadians to learn more about schizophrenia and psychosis.

I would like to acknowledge members of the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario who are watching us today and thank you for your hard work in bringing awareness to this serious illness. By raising awareness, we can reduce the stigma of schizophrenia, which impacts more than 135,000 Ontarians. Stigma and discrimination have been shown to undermine access to health care services, employment and social services, and on average, individuals with schizophrenia and other serious mental illnesses die 25 years earlier than the average Canadians.

Schizophrenia also takes a toll on the families and the friends of people living with this mental illness. They often become primary caregivers responsible for



providing crisis intervention, encouraging and overseeing support and treatment. Caregivers are a critical part of the mental health support system.

In the past few years, we've seen a noticeable public shift on mental health. It's a subject that is now being openly discussed among the public and policy-makers. From its human toll to its economic impacts, the ramifications of serious mental health issues, including schizophrenia, are being acknowledged.

I'm delighted the government is addressing this issue with the second phase of Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. This phase of the strategy puts a focus on strengthening community health care services and improving access to care.

Finally, I want to thank and acknowledge the great work being carried out by the Toronto East General Hospital, along with WoodGreen and Neighbourhood Link, in supporting individuals suffering from mental illness in my riding of Beaches–East York. Thank you for helping build a better, happier and healthy Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### PROTECTING THE SCHOOL YEAR ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE

Mr. Flynn moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Mr. Speaker, I'll make my statement during ministerial statements.

Point of order.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** A point of order from the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the speedy passage of the bill that I introduced just now, which would ensure that school kids are back in school tomorrow: An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The minister is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? I heard a no.

## MOTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the speedy passage of the bill that was introduced today, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. This is about putting a motion.

The government House leader is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? I heard a no.

## HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight tonight, Monday, May 25, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight tonight, Monday, May 15, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business. Do we agree? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1322 to 1327.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Members, take your seats, please.

I beg your forgiveness. I misread; I need to reread the motion to ensure that it's properly recorded.

It was moved by the government House leader that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight tonight, Monday, May 25, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

### Ayes

Arnott, Ted	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Bailey, Robert	Hunter, Mitzie	Nicholls, Rick
Baker, Yvan	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Balkissoon, Bas	Jones, Sylvia	Potts, Arthur
Ballard, Chris	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Barrett, Toby	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Bradley, James J.	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Chan, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Sergio, Mario
Chiarelli, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Smith, Todd

Clark, Steve  
 Colle, Mike  
 Coteau, Michael  
 Crack, Grant  
 Damerla, Dipika  
 Del Duca, Steven  
 Delaney, Bob  
 Dickson, Joe  
 Dong, Han  
 Dunlop, Garfield  
 Fedeli, Victor  
 Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
 Fraser, John  
 Hardeman, Ernie

Martow, Gila  
 Matthews, Deborah  
 Mauro, Bill  
 McDonell, Jim  
 McGarry, Kathryn  
 McMahon, Eleanor  
 McMeekin, Ted  
 McNaughton, Monte  
 Meilleur, Madeleine  
 Milczyn, Peter Z.  
 Miller, Norm  
 Moridi, Reza  
 Murray, Glen R.  
 Naidoo-Harris, Indira

Sousa, Charles  
 Takhar, Harinder S.  
 Thibeault, Glenn  
 Thompson, Lisa M.  
 Vernie, Daiene  
 Walker, Bill  
 Wilson, Jim  
 Wong, Soo  
 Wynne, Kathleen O.  
 Yakubuski, John  
 Yurek, Jeff  
 Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time to be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
 Bisson, Gilles  
 Fife, Catherine  
 Forster, Cindy  
 French, Jennifer K.  
 Gates, Wayne

Gélinas, France  
 Gretzky, Lisa  
 Hatfield, Percy  
 Horwath, Andrea  
 Mantha, Michael  
 Miller, Paul

Natyshak, Taras  
 Sattler, Peggy  
 Singh, Jagmeet  
 Tabuns, Peter  
 Taylor, Monique  
 Vanthof, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 70; the nays are 18.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** As members may be aware, three local strikes by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation have closed secondary schools in the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District School Board and the Peel District School Board. The longest strike, the labour dispute at the Durham District School Board, has been ongoing since April 20 of this year. These strikes affect more than 70,000 students in Ontario, and these students are apprehensive about losing their school year.

The Minister of Education informed me today that she has received notification from the ERC, the Education Relations Commission, that, in its opinion, it has determined that the successful completion of courses of study of the affected students in each of the affected school boards is now in jeopardy.

The most profound negative aspects of this labour dispute have severe implications on those who are not directly involved in it, namely, the students who have no control over the course of this dispute. They know that they are the ones who are most affected by this dispute, yet they're unable to do anything about it. They're looking to us in this House for assistance.

As a responsible government, we have no choice. We must act to protect the interests of the students. The continuation of this dispute and the resulting disruption in education and its corresponding effects give rise to

very serious public interest concerns. That is why I have introduced the Protecting the School Year Act, 2015.

We must act now. The ERC has consulted the affected parties and has concluded that that there is no early prospect of a settlement of the local agreements in each of the three local boards that I mentioned. Certainly, none can be achieved within sufficient time to avoid jeopardizing the school year of the affected students.

If passed, this bill would get students back into their classrooms and end the labour dispute. We don't want the students to be penalized any further because of labour disputes between teachers and their local school boards.

The bill I've introduced would provide an end to the labour disputes. It would get students back into their classrooms, it would order the school board to resume normal operations immediately after the act comes into force, and it would put a stop to the strike action currently under way by the teachers.

If the respective school boards and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the OSSTF, have not resolved the local issues in dispute before the date that the act would receive royal assent, all outstanding issues in the dispute between them in respect of local bargaining would immediately be referred to fair and balanced binding mediation-arbitration, as recommended by the Education Relations Commission.

The bill would also provide for maximum penalties on both sides: \$2,000 for individuals and \$25,000 for either the board or the union for non-compliance. Each day of non-compliance would be considered a separate offence.

Everyone in this House wants the parties to reach a negotiated settlement. They want them to achieve a quick ending to the labour dispute.

We want school boards and employees' bargaining agents to be able to negotiate fair and reasonable agreements, but this must be done without putting students' school year in jeopardy. However, we must also be prepared to act if necessary. That is what we're accomplishing by introducing this act today.

Let me tell you, Speaker, that we're doing this reluctantly. However, the public interest demands that we do this expeditiously. I remind members that we've received notification from the Education Relations Commission stating that the students' school year in the affected school boards is now in jeopardy, as I speak.

For that reason, I ask all members to support this legislation for quick passage so that we can be sure our children's education will get back to normal in the province, in these three school boards, as soon as possible.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's now time for responses. The member from Simcoe North.

Oh, I'm sorry. Are you standing for statements by ministries?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Yes, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm sorry. Minister of Finance for a statement by ministries.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, I move third reading of Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans—

*Interjections.*



**Hon. Charles Sousa:** No? Am I wrong on this one, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We're in the middle of statements and responses. There is no other statement. I'm going to defer to the member from Simcoe North for responses.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

On April 20, when 24,000 students were locked out of the classroom in Durham, I stood up in this House during question period and asked the Minister of Education about the 24,000 students in Durham. I asked the Minister of Education what she was going to say to those students who want to learn, and what she was going to say the parents who want to see them succeed in the classroom. For the last five weeks, she did nothing and said nothing; dithered and drawled on as she blamed local boards at every chance she got.

But the buck stops with her and the government. For six weeks, as two more school boards and 48,000 more students were impacted, the Minister of Education did nothing to ensure that the students' year was saved. She used them as pawns in a blame game and kept them locked out of the classroom as she failed to negotiate in good faith.

While she has allowed the education of the students from Durham, Rainbow and Peel to spin into chaos, the Ontario PC caucus has been consistent in our position that the most important issue in the current dispute with the OSSTF is the education of students and the need to get them back in class as quickly as possible—an urgency the Liberal government did not share.

With great reluctance, the Ontario PC caucus will be supporting quick passage of the proposed back-to-work legislation.

High school students in these three boards must be able to return to class at the first opportunity to complete their studies. Most importantly, those students in grade 12 must—must—be able to participate in end-of-year activities and graduate in order to ensure they are prepared for college or university, or to enter the workforce.

I must reiterate that we are supporting the legislation reluctantly. The legislation will only ameliorate a bad situation that has been created by your government's failed two-tiered disaster of a bargaining process, as outlined in Bill 122, and by your government's inability to reach a negotiated settlement. Your government, your ministry and the Ministry of Education must recognize the fundamental flaws in Bill 122 that have led to the chaos in our education system.

There are many Ontario school boards yet to successfully to negotiate collective agreements. Without any delay, you should introduce legislation to fix the dysfunctional bargaining process that your government has put in place. Believe me: Unless this is fixed, we're going to have absolute turmoil by September 1.

You must fix this system. You must introduce legislation to immediately clarify and fix this bargaining mess. It is absolutely imperative that we ensure that the

chaos now experienced by high school students in Durham, Peel and Rainbow will not spread to the rest of the Ontario's education system.

If the process outlined in Bill 122 is allowed to continue, there is no doubt in my mind that more labour unrest will follow. I just can't believe for a second, if we think that this bill today, even if we time-allocate it or we get unanimous consent—for sure there will be turmoil in the education system.

It's not just the boards, the union locals and the provincial unions that are impacted by the lack of clarity and confusion from Bill 122. In fact, the obscure commission you relied on to tell you the school year was in jeopardy has also been affected by this legislation. A commission once independent from negotiations is now an arm's-length organization of the biggest party in the negotiations.

**1340**

Bill 122 has led to an absurd blame game where the government blames everyone but themselves and fails to take any responsibility—and we knew that over and over again. But in the end, it is the students who are impacted the most by the failed system in Bill 122. It is the students who have been held out of the classroom. It is the students who have missed their concerts. It is the students who have missed their games. It is the students who didn't know if they would graduate. It is the students who feared they wouldn't make it to college or university. It is the students you have hurt the most with Bill 122.

You pandered for years and kicked the can down the road, but now you have run out of road. If you don't get your house in order, I am certain this won't be the last piece of back-to-work legislation you will be introducing.

I want to say, on behalf of our young leader, Patrick Brown, and I would like to read—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm not sure what they're yelling at over there, Mr. Speaker. I just said I want to bring something from Mr. Brown:

"The Ontario PC caucus, and in particular the PC education critic, Garfield Dunlop"—I'm not bragging about that—"has been consistent in its position that the most important issue in this current dispute with OSSTF is the education of students and the need to get them back" in the classroom "as quickly as possible. As such, the Ontario PC caucus will be supporting the quick passage of the proposed back-to-work legislation.

"High school students affected by the strike must be able to return to class immediately to complete their studies at this critical juncture in the school year. In particular"—and remember, we've only got 25 days left in the school year right now, Mr. Speaker. "In particular, grade 12 students must be able to participate in end-of-year activities and graduate in order to go on to post-secondary studies or enter the workforce....

"I trust your government has recognized the fundamental flaws in Bill 122 that have led to the current situation. As there are other Ontario school boards yet to

successfully negotiate a collective agreement, I would ask you to immediately fix the dysfunctional bargaining process that your government has put in place to ensure that the chaos now experienced by high school students in Durham, Peel and Sudbury will not spread to the rest of Ontario's educational system."

I say that on behalf of Patrick Brown, the leader of the Ontario PC Party. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I'm proud to be able to rise on behalf of the Ontario New Democratic caucus to speak to this back-to-work legislation.

Speaker, parents and students and educators and educational workers in this province have a right to be frustrated. Liberal education cuts are undermining the ability of students to learn, resulting in closed schools, fewer classroom supports, decreased access to special education, and strikes and work-to-rule campaigns by teachers who would much rather be in the classrooms.

On top of this, teachers, educational workers and educational assistants are all being fired across this province. These cuts hurt Ontario's students, and these cuts undermine our teachers and educational workers' ability to do their jobs and provide the best possible education for our kids.

So, here we are, Speaker: Once again, this Liberal government has thrown Ontario's school system into chaos, and it's students and parents who are left paying the price.

This should come as no surprise. For months we've been hearing from parents and teachers expressing their concerns about Liberal cuts to education and what it means for their kids' education. Students have been out of the classroom in Durham since April 20, in Sudbury since April 27, and in Peel since May 4. All the while, the government has sat on the sidelines perplexed and confused.

This is a Premier who campaigned on promises of fixing the bargaining process, of repairing the damage done in our schools by Bill 115. You remember that bill, Speaker: Bill 115. In fact, we elected Catherine Fife as a result of the mess that the Liberals made with Bill 115—of their cynical ploy to try to gain a majority government at the expense of teachers and students and families. In reality, this Premier and this government have no respect for teachers, they have no respect for students, they have no respect for parents, and they certainly have no respect for collective bargaining. Just like with Bill 115, the government has shown that it prefers, rather, to legislate, because they are unwilling to negotiate.

Make no mistake: This is only the beginning. This government is making it clear that it will legislate anything that it fails to negotiate in good faith.

The Minister of Education and Premier claim that these are local issues, but with the breakdown of central talks with OSSTF and ETFO, the government must take responsibility for throwing our schools into chaos. They have created this mess. They have now finally been flushed out on the irresponsible way that they've behaved

with this process. They have done nothing to fix the mess that they have created. They should have been working to fix the problems before we got to this point. Instead, they let this chaos drag on week after week after week—not because it's good for students, not because it's good for parents, not because it's good for educational workers and teachers, but because the Liberals think it might be good for them. They think it might be good for them to go down to the wire and then try to ram something through this Legislature with a unanimous consent motion, and New Democrats will not—will not—allow that to happen. But that's the usual way the Liberals do things: It's all about them and it's not about the right thing for Ontarians.

Look, we know we can't stop the government from passing this legislation. They have a majority; they're going to do that. They're going to do that within the next couple of days; there's no doubt about it. But we also know that the Liberals have not learned a single thing since Bill 115. Again they have failed parents. Again they have failed students. Again they have failed teachers. Once again, they are cynically playing political football with students and families.

Actually, parents who haven't seen question period yet should watch the rerun tonight, because that minister literally lobbed it over to the other side, which shows how cynical that minister and that government are.

Speaker, the bottom line is that this is a Liberal mess. This is plain and simple a Liberal mess. It is a Liberal leopard that has not changed its spots. It is creating chaos in our education system again. It has done it in the past, and sadly, we know from past behaviour and current behaviour that this will always be the behaviour of the Liberals, as long as it's politically helpful for them. It doesn't matter about anyone else.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank all members for their statements.

## PETITIONS

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Bill Walker:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

"Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer's hydro bill; and

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

"Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper *Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy*;



"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges."

I fully support it, will affix my signature and send it with page Sheila.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** "Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I support this petition and affix my signature.

#### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It is entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water" and it reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

1350

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

It's my pleasure to sign and to support this petition and to send it down with page Brady.

#### TAXATION

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015;

"Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn't necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act;

"Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating;

"Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

"Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses."

I agree with the petition and I will sign it.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I have a petition to save the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the

pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

“Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

“Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

“Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry’s goal of increasing employment and the provincial government’s poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government’s plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.”

I couldn’t agree with this more. I’m going to put my name on it and give it to page Bridget to bring to the Clerk.

#### FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees access to publicly funded French-language education; and

“Whereas there are more than 1,000 children attending French elementary schools in east Toronto (Beaches–East York and Toronto–Danforth) and those numbers continue to grow; and

“Whereas there is no French secondary school (grades 7-12) yet in east Toronto, requiring students wishing to continue their studies in French school boards to travel two hours every day to attend the closest French secondary school, while several English schools in east Toronto sit half-empty since there are no requirements or incentives for school boards to release underutilized schools to other boards in need; and

“Whereas it is well documented that children leave the French-language system for the English-language system between grades 7 and 9 due to the inaccessibility of French-language secondary schools, and that it is also well established that being educated in French at the elementary level is not sufficient to solidify French-language skills for life; and

“Whereas the Ontario government acknowledged in February 2007 that there is an important shortage of French-language schools in all of Toronto and even provided funds to open some secondary schools, and yet, not a single French secondary school has opened in east Toronto; and

“Whereas the commissioner of French-language services stated in a report in June 2011 that ‘... time is running out to address the serious shortage of at least one

new French-language school at the secondary level in the eastern part of the city of Toronto’; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Education has confirmed that we all benefit when school board properties are used effectively in support of publicly funded education and that the various components of our education system should be aligned to serve the needs of students....;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario... :

“That the Minister of Education assist one or both French school boards in locating a suitable underutilized school building in east Toronto that may be sold or shared for the purpose of opening a French secondary school (grades 7-12) in the community by September 2015, so that French students have a secondary school close to where they live.”

#### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas an industrial wind turbine development is to be constructed approximately 3.5 kilometres west of the village of Crysler by EDP Renewables; and

“Whereas the project will consist of 25-50 mega wind turbines and this has raised concerns by the citizens of Crysler and surrounding area related to health, safety and property values; and

“Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approval;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments, and the Minister of the Environment conduct a thorough scientific study on the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines.”

I agree with this and will sign it and pass it off to page Brady.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It’s my pleasure to present a petition that was signed by Micheline Lacroix, who’s a resident of my riding; she actually lives on my street. It goes as follows:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return” and you will “lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals” and you will “lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;”

They “petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario....

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”



I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Ram to bring it to the Clerk.

### LEGAL AID

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** I have a petition for population-based legal services funding:

“Whereas Mississauga Community Legal Services provides free legal services to legal aid clients within a community of nearly 800,000 population; and

“Whereas legal services in communities like Toronto and Hamilton serve, per capita, fewer people living in poverty, are better staffed and better funded; and

“Whereas Mississauga and Brampton have made progress in having Ontario provide” legal “funding for human services on a fair and equitable, population-based model;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Ministry of the Attorney General revise the current distribution of allocated funds in the 2012-13 budget, and adopt a population-based model, factoring in population growth rates to ensure Ontario funds are allocated in an efficient, fair and effective manner.”

I sign my name to the petition and I give it to page Maya.

### ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

**Mr. Bill Walker:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ontario government’s proposed Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) is a mandatory pension plan which would target small businesses and their employees; and

1400

“Whereas there has been little to no discussion on what the costs would be, or who would pay them; and

“Whereas affected businesses would be hit with up to \$1,643 per employee, per year in new payroll taxes starting in 2017; and

“Whereas affected employees would have up to \$1,643 per year extra deducted from their paycheques, and it would take 40 years for them to see the full pension benefits; and

“Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business predicts the unemployment rate in Ontario would rise by 0.5%, and there would be a reduction in wages over the longer term; and

“Whereas all of these costs would be shouldered exclusively by small businesses and their employees; and

“Whereas public sector and big business employees who already have a pension plan will not be asked to pay into the plan;

“We, the undersigned, do not support implementation of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and petition the government of Ontario to axe the pension tax.”

I fully support, will affix my signature and send it with page Sheila.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I present this petition signed by Mike Brady of Garrison, Ontario.

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I sign my name to this petition and give it to page Bridget to deliver.

### CREDIT UNIONS

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that’s addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

“Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers’ resources;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario’s economy and create jobs in three ways:

“—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

“—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

“—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries.”

I agree with this petition. I’m going to affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Julien.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### POOLED REGISTERED PENSION PLANS ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LES RÉGIMES DE PENSION AGRÉÉS COLLECTIFS

Mr. Sousa moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 57, Loi créant un cadre pour les régimes de pension agréés collectifs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I assume the minister wishes to lead off the debate?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** It's my honour to stand today in the House for third reading of Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this government has undertaken significant reforms to the retirement income system in Ontario. In 2008, the report of the Expert Commission on Pensions laid out a comprehensive blueprint for pension reform. It also encouraged a national discussion on improvements to the system. The report included recommendations to modernize and strengthen pension laws in Ontario through the Pension Benefits Act, which had not been updated in more than 20 years. That's exactly what we did. This government passed two pension reform bills, and many of the new regulations required to implement the provisions have been approved by the government or are under way.

Then, in 2010, Ontario released a discussion paper on the possible approaches to strengthen the retirement income system. The recommendations included a fully funded CPP enhancement, supplemented by pension innovation, to expand retirement savings arrangements and reduce their costs.

In 2012, the government extended the solvency funding relief for private sector pension plans provided in 2009 for a further three years, helping employers manage their pension costs. Temporary solvency funding relief was also provided to public sector defined benefit pension plans, provided they took steps to put their plans on a more sustainable track.

In the 2013 Ontario budget, Ontario indicated that it would move forward to introduce innovative pension models such as PRPPs. Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015, is fulfilling that commitment. As you know, Mr. Speaker, pooled registered pension plans, or PRPPs, are a new type of voluntary, low-cost, tax-assisted individual retirement savings vehicle. They're a new retirement savings option that would make it easier for Ontario employees and the self-employed to save for retirement.

PRPPs are savings plans designed to provide retirement income for individuals who pay into them. Individuals have their own individual accounts, into which contributions are made. Contributions are locked in, and benefits at retirement are based on accumulated contributions and investment returns. Similar to other tax-assisted savings vehicles such as registered retirement savings plans, or RRSPs, individuals would not pay income tax on their PRPP contributions and the investment returns until they withdraw their funds.

But PRPPs differ from RRSPs in a number of important steps:

—Individuals' accounts are pooled for investment purposes.

—Contributions are locked in until an individual reaches retirement age, and legislation requires that PRPPs be provided at low cost.

—Administrators are held to a higher legal standard of care.

Similar to registered pension plan contributions, employer PRPP contributions are tax-deductible. They're also not subject to the employer health tax, employment insurance premiums, CPP contributions or workers' compensation premiums. This can result in lower taxes and withholdings than one of a group of RRSPs.

The 2014 Ontario budget committed to introducing a legislative framework for pooled registered pension plans in the fall of 2014, and we did exactly that. The federal government has already implemented PRPPs for sectors under federal jurisdiction such as employees in the banking, interprovincial transportation and communications sectors. The federal legislation also applies to persons employed or self-employed in Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

The federal Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act and associated regulations came into force on December 14, 2012. It enables corporations such as banks and insurance companies to be the administrators of PRPPs, and sets out rules for establishing and administering PRPPs.

But legislation must be passed by each province before PRPPs can be made available to individuals employed in provincially regulated sectors and to self-employed individuals working in the province. As a result, PRPPs will not be available to the majority of Ontarians until legislation is passed by this House and proclaimed into force once supporting regulations have been made.

The purpose of the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015, is to provide a legal framework for the establishment and administration of PRPPs in Ontario. It would apply to individuals employed in provincially regulated businesses and the self-employed in Ontario, as well as individuals employed in federally regulated industries in Ontario whose employers do not offer PRPPs.

Bill 57 largely adopts the federal framework, but this proposed legislation, Bill 57, includes Ontario-specific features where provincial law and/or processes are required to apply or where additional provisions are required for added clarity or consistency with Ontario's minimum pension standards legislation.

In practice, we might expect PRPPs to work as follows: Employers who choose to offer PRPPs to their employees would be responsible for selecting and entering into a contract with a third-party PRPP administrator such as a bank or insurance company. The administrator would then be responsible for managing PRPP investments and for communicating with plan members on matters relating to their PRPP.



If an employer chooses to offer a PRPP, an employee would be automatically enrolled within it, but the employee can then choose to opt out. Employee contributions to the PRPP would be made through automatic paycheque deductions. The employer would be required to deduct and remit their employees' contributions to the administrator.

#### 1410

Individuals who do not participate in a workplace PRPP, such as self-employed individuals, would be able to enrol themselves into a PRPP of their choice. In this case, an individual would contact a PRPP administrator to join a plan and would make the contributions through an automatic payment plan with their financial institution.

Each administrator would be responsible for designing its PRPP. A plan administrator could choose to offer one or multiple PRPPs, depending on its marketing strategy and whether it sought to tailor its PRPP for specific employees. Administrators would have the option of including different investment options to reflect the varying risk preferences of the members. A default option would be applied to members who did not make a choice on an investment option within a specific time frame.

In order to administer a PRPP, a corporation would be first required to obtain a licence to operate as a PRPP administrator. To do so, the corporation would need to satisfy conditions that will be set out in regulation.

This government recognizes that increasing retirement savings in the province is a complex challenge that requires a multifaceted approach. Establishing pooled registered pension plans is just one step in our plan, which will encourage investment in voluntary retirement savings tools. That is why I ask the members of this assembly to support the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** This is a time-allocated motion; there are no questions and comments.

Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm very pleased to be able to have a few minutes in which to offer some comments on third reading of Bill 57.

As I think I have stated before in earlier sections of the debate, this is a particularly important bill, in my view, because I introduced it in April 2013 as a private member's bill. I was looking back at the debate at the time when that took place, and it was clear from one of the members of the government that the government was going to support this. Equally, I'm here to support Bill 57 today. As a private member, to see one's private member's bill then morph into part of the budget a few weeks later was certainly something that I appreciated.

I want to talk for a few moments about how we got here in terms of this as a tool. As the minister has mentioned, there is a very distinct legal relationship between the government and the individual provinces in order to create the pooled part of this title and of this pension plan

because, as I will explain in a moment, it has become increasingly the interest of other countries in the world looking at pension plans that exist in this country and in the various provinces.

Pension plans have taken a spike in general public understanding and, in some cases, confusion. The idea was that by 2012, the federal government had introduced companion legislation; that meant that the individual province that wished to participate in a pooled registered plan would have to create legislation that was complementary to that which the federal government had introduced.

What happened, then, in the next couple of years: Quebec has already launched its version of a pooled registered pension plan and BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan all have legislation. I think it's really a demonstration of the importance of finding new tools for people to save. The various provinces have taken advantage of the federal leadership, and I certainly want to compliment this government on joining those other provinces that have worked to make this another saving tool.

I just want explain a little bit about why this has come up. I've said that pensions have suddenly acquired a new interest by people who (a) have one and are worried about it, (b) don't have one and are worried about it, and (c) are concerned about the possibility of the mandatory nature of the Ontario choice.

So why has the issue come up so much on pensions? There are four things which have all played a role, and one is that we all live longer. That point between when you retire and when you die has changed dramatically in the last few decades. We live longer, we retire earlier, and anyone who has any understanding of mortgage interest rates and market interest rates will know that the return on investment has been stalled for the last few years. Pensions were always built on, first of all, life expectancy and the space between life expectancy and retirement.

They also made robust investments, and the money from those investments went to pay the people who were retiring. Very often the value of the pension differed dramatically according to where you worked and what kind of arrangement was made. It could be the value of your contributions over your lifespan, over your working lifespan, or it might be the best five years. So there's a huge variation in the amount of money that's available to come back to pensioners. It was in light of that and a number of initiatives that other governments have taken on that we have the concern today about pensions, and some of the imperatives like life expectancy and return on investment have to be dealt with. The sooner you do that, the better people are going to feel some security in the pension plan and the pension plan they might have or wish to have.

I would say that PRPPs, the pooled registered pensions, are an essential addition to retirement savings options. They are similar to a defined contribution plan in the amount of money that is determined as your contribution; however, the employer contributions are not mandatory.

A PRPP pools, as the name implies, the contributions together to achieve lower investment management and administration costs. This is something that is very appealing because in today's computer world it's very easy for a company with the administrative responsibility of these pension plans to have people enrolled. The amount of money going in is standardized by the employer, and the whole thing, as a transaction, can be done in moments. Obviously, when you're able to make those kinds of adjustments in moments, it means the administrative cost is significantly lower.

PRPPs can be offered to employers and to self-employed persons as well. The PRPP supplier takes responsibility for the employee relationship, and when an employee changes jobs, he can move the PRPP to the new employer. That's very important because, as we know, the mobility of employees today is significant. They change jobs either voluntarily or otherwise at a regular rate. They find work in another province or something like that, and they need to know that this little pot of money that's growing is theirs, and it's in their name, and they can take it anywhere in the country. So it's a convenient pension plan, it's portable and it's registered to the employee.

I think that as we look at the younger generation we see that people stay in jobs for a much briefer time than they used to. It's important, then, for this younger, more mobile generation to have access to a portable pension plan that is their own, which is why it's registered, than be tied to a company pension plan. If a younger person has five to 10 jobs from ages 25 to 50, it doesn't make sense to have a patchwork of pensions. Rather, it makes much more sense for that person to have a consistent pooled registered pension plan that they can take to each new job.

1420

People might ask, "Why not RRSPs?" Pooled pensions offer a strong alternative to RRSPs because they are considerably less to administer than is possible with an RRSP. This large-scale potential investment process with the pooled pension is certainly better.

It's interesting, too, to have spoken with representatives of Ontario's financial industries and banks. I mentioned that they can offer transactions in a moment. They see the pooled registered plan as an attractive product they want to be able to offer. They know how difficult it is for people to feel comfortable about saving, and understanding what the choices are and looking at some of the obstacles they have.

The pooled pension is designed to take away those obstacles, to provide people with an option to save that they can take with them to a new employer in a participating province. They certainly make savings easier and will most likely encourage people to save who may not be doing so now. Since the money is taken away—it's a reverse option within 60 days. We know that people get used to the idea and they're much more likely to maintain their contributions instead of backing out.

Business stakeholders have long held the PRPP as superior to standard pension plans because it is voluntary

for employers. If an employer should choose to contribute to an employee's PRPP, their contributions are deducted as an expense. That means they are not required to pay CPP or any applicable payroll taxes on the contribution, and unlike an RRSP, contributions to a pooled pension also do not count as a taxable income to the employee. In the economic uncertainty of today, it is obvious that pooled registered plans can benefit both employees and business owners. It's definitely a win-win situation.

Back in 2012, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business surveyed their members. The survey found that 80% of small business owners do not have a retirement plan in place for themselves or their employees, but 34% would consider participating in a PRPP if it was available. I think that the fact that it's not requiring onsite administration, which is an additional burden to the cost of the employer, again makes this a useful tool.

In a submission to the government, the CFIB explicitly supported PRPPs over the proposed Ontario pension: "CFIB is pleased that the province of Ontario is holding consultations on implementing a pooled registered pension plan since, from a small business perspective, a" pooled registered plan "is a much more favourable option than mandatory increases in CPP premiums or mandatory contributions to a new Ontario pension plan."

CFIB has publicly supported the idea as "a voluntary, low-cost and administratively simple retirement mechanism. If properly designed, the PRPP has the potential of expanding pension coverage by attracting employers, employees and the self-employed" who currently do not have a pension plan. I think that's really an important feature that business recognizes in this.

The other thing I mentioned right at the beginning was that other jurisdictions are looking at ways by which they could modify and still have a viable vehicle for savings for employees, and one that is interesting to look at is that of the United Kingdom, which is referred to as the NEST. It introduced these changes in 2008, and the former Labour government made it mandatory for employers to offer this workplace pension plan that, in Britain's case, both employers and employees contribute to. The NEST—the National Employment Savings Trust—was established in 2010 as a national pension scheme open to any employer who wants to use it to satisfy his workplace pension duty. Since its inception in 2012, it has been growing. From 2013-14, the number of employers offering NEST increased from 347 to 4,692, and membership increased from 80,000 to over a million members. It gives you a sense, then, of the kind of opportunity that pooling and registering a pension plan can offer, and certainly the NEST is a really good model for us to look at.

The NEST pension scheme is run by the NEST Corp. It decides how the scheme is run and how they invest contributions. It is accountable to Parliament through the Department for Work and Pensions, but it is not part of the government. It is run independently and works for pensioners. As they say, "We're here to make money for



you, not us.” I think that’s something that we always have to keep in mind whenever we’re looking at the different models of providing savings or a pension: They have to understand who the customer is.

Anyway, NEST, like CPP, gets the best returns—many of which are outside of the UK, just as CPP has investments around the world. Some of the top 10 companies include Apple, Exxon Mobil, Google, Microsoft, Royal Dutch Shell and Nestlé. It’s interesting to note that 8% of its shares are in UK companies, 17.4% are European, and nearly 55% are North American. So NEST invests in the best interests of its pensioners, as would a pooled registered pension plan in this province.

I mentioned the CPP, and just to give you a contrast, it also heavily invests in foreign assets. According to a 2013 CBC report, the fund behind Canada’s largest single-purpose pension was worth just over \$170 billion by the end of 2012, up from \$152 billion in 2011. So it’s not a perfect contrast, but it gives you a sense of the fact that other jurisdictions are looking at the same parameters, the same imperatives of lifespan and return on interest and things like that, to make sure we find something that’s going to be a good comparison and one that we can work from. So I think that in the UK’s example, employees can bring it from one workplace to another, move within the UK and still have access, in the same way that ours is contemplated.

As the minister mentioned, each administrator has the opportunity to offer a diverse array of funds to suit the investor, and I think this is really important, particularly for people of different ages.

1430

I mentioned a moment ago about the importance of coming up with a modern pension style for younger people whose work is likely to take them to several employers, and in the same way they have different kinds of needs in their investment portfolios. So the administrators have the opportunity to look at what suits the employees best, and one of them can be divided by how old you are and how your priorities change as the decades flow.

The other thing we have to look at is portability and choice of investment. This would create an ideal scenario for Ontarians who wish to invest and might not already be doing so. By making investing easy and portable, and offering choice, I think you can see that the NEST example gives you an idea of what Ontario’s PRPP could do to encourage people to save for retirement.

I mentioned the issue around the Ontario pension, but there are some very interesting quotations from different people with regard to the importance of the pooled pension plan as a contrast to the Ontario pension.

In 2012, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter to then-Finance Minister Dwight Duncan, calling on the government to introduce legislation to implement PRPPs. They said, “We hope you believe, as we do, that PRPPs will help strengthen the retirement income system in Ontario.” When we’re able to stand here for third reading, I think the message has obviously made it through the years and the changes in finance ministers.

In 2012, the CFIB urged Finance Minister Duncan to move quickly to implement pooled registered pension plans. The whole idea then was that PRPPs address some of the problems with current pension tools by promoting lower fees and shifting the administrative burden from employers to financial institutions.

I want to explain why that keeps coming up and why it’s important. In small businesses, no one is able to afford to have that level of expertise on-site, or it’s not something they do all the time. Handing those responsibilities off to an administrator gives small business the opportunity to spend its time and the time of its employees and their expertise on what they do well, instead of having to find somebody with some time to organize this kind of administration. It’s really important that the administrative burden is part of the administration of this centrally, as opposed to making it a burden for employers.

If we jump up to 2014, again more interest in PRPPs. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the CGA—the Certified General Accountants of Ontario—did a consultation with employers on pension reform and found again that they were firmly in favour of PRPPs. Another response came from Dean Connor, president and CEO of Sun Life Financial. He said, “I don’t think we need to, or should, mandate additional retirement saving, but I am in favour of the kind of universal coverage with opt-out choice that the Quebec version of PRPP provides.”

In the few moments I have left, I just want to review for people why our caucus is supporting this. First of all, it is now about three years that we’ve been asking for it, but mostly there are some key ideas here. Participation is voluntary. An employee will have 60 days to opt out of a PRPP, and voluntary contributions by employers—I can see where, in a competitive market, that might be something that an employer would look to as an incentive to retain and maintain employees.

Contributions are locked in until an individual reaches retirement age, which has been deemed 55, and the individuals’ accounts are pooled for investment purposes. That means a low cost and better investment. PRPPs provide professional investment management at a low cost to plan members by pooling the funds of all individual accounts for investment purposes, as well as limiting the investment options provided to plan members. I go back to the example I gave of NEST and how many millions of pounds it has become in a very short period of time. It is that contribution and that kind of investment numbers of people that are sure to make this a well-funded opportunity for people. Similar to registered pension plan contributions, employer PRPP contributions, as well as employee contributions, are tax-deductible.

The Portfolio Management Association of Canada has written to the government in support of PRPPs, and I want to read the excerpt from its letter to Minister Hunter:

“We are pleased that Ontario has recognized the advantages of a PRPP program and has moved forward with PRPP legislation. PRPPs provide the opportunity to

participate in a simple and straightforward pension plan. PMAC has been an active supporter of the development of the PRPP federal framework and believe it is a better retirement savings vehicle versus comprehensive or overhaul changes to CPP or the ORPP.

"We believe that PRPPs provide more flexibility and choice for Canadians and their employers in how they save for retirement and leverage off the existing infrastructure around the administration of similar plans.

"By leveraging off the existing systems/staffing/training and servicing resources that many financial institutions have already developed in virtually all the cities and towns in Canada this will seemingly greatly accelerate the rollout time to launch PRPPs and ultimately improve overall cost effectiveness (i.e. same resources already in place servicing the \$100 billion in the 50,000 DC," or defined-contribution, "and GRRSP," or group registered retirement savings plans, "and the hundreds of billions in individual RRSP plans serviced by some of these entities so these costs can be spread over this existing asset base). This will also further strengthen the three pillars around retirement funding for Canadians.

"It is important for governments at the two senior levels in Canada to realize that there are other safety nets besides pension plans. In addition to the \$1.6 trillion in pension assets in Canada and the non-registered savings of Canadians, the RRSP/RRIF/TFSA pool of assets now exceeds \$1.4 trillion. As at 2012, these registered plans are growing almost \$70 billion a year on new contributions alone."

Clearly, there is a strong case, then, for us having the registered retirement plan.

One of the last quotes I will give: "Modernizing our retirement income system to ensure Canadians can save more for their retirement is among the most important jobs for governments today. Without action, future retirees in Canada will not have the same opportunities as were available in the past for accumulating adequate income for retirement. This is why the Association of Canadian Pension Management (ACPM) has championed the concept of pooled registered pension plans.... ACPM believes that this kind of innovative new arrangement is key to creating the kind of retirement security that working Canadians deserve."

I think that the last quote, from the Association of Canadian Pension Management, certainly focuses on the issue. We need to modernize our retirement income system to ensure it is sustainable and makes sense for future generations. As the reality of employment and workplaces change, with employees switching jobs more frequently, we need to ensure that we create a saving culture. The PRPP would surely go farther in promoting a saving culture, rather than an ORPP, which will be mandatory and will not give people a choice in their retirement savings plan.

1440

Today, if Ontario passes PRPP legislation, almost 90% of Canadians will have access to pooled registered plans. This will likely lower the costs, increase the poten-

tial purchasing power of the plans, and reduce barriers of interprovincial movement and trade. We need Ontario to be part of the Canadian PRPP landscape, as the more contributors to a pension plan, the better the investment, meaning a healthy pension plan.

Currently, there are many pensions with an unfunded liability, meaning that if the pension fund were to be wrapped up today, it would not be able to fulfill its payment promises.

PRPPs are a promising addition to the array of retirement savings options that are available to Ontarians and Canadians. We need PRPPs, not an ORPP. PRPPs are mobile and in the employee's name; the PRPP can go where they go. They are low-cost, have simple administration and are voluntary.

I fully support the passage of Bill 57 and encourage all Ontarians, especially those without a pension, to consider investing in a PRPP.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you to the minister for the opportunity to rise in the Legislature today and speak to this bill, Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act.

As I've noted before, the title of this bill is a bit misleading. To refer to the financial products that this legislation will establish as pensions would be like calling a fire sale of Hydro One "asset optimization." Oh, that's right; you're doing that as well. The point is, the title misrepresents the intention of the bill. Pensions, or at least the way we traditionally refer to pensions, are designed to benefit their members and their members alone. PRPPs, however, are a financial product. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with financial products, but there is something concerning about the way that the government has attempted to package these plans.

Ontarians are experiencing a retirement security crisis. We've heard the government say this time and time again. But their decision to prioritize their private PRPP legislation over a public option shows that the government has their priorities are out of order.

Ontarians deserve stability and security in retirement, and they deserve to know that the money they invest isn't going to be cannibalized by fees. Generally speaking, in a private plan such as PRPPs, individuals can expect to lose roughly half of their benefit to fees over their lifetime. Mr. Speaker, this is not an insignificant amount. It can mean the difference between security in retirement and struggling to get by.

Over the past six months, the government has consistently referred to PRPPs as voluntary options or, in other words, a choice—and who doesn't like to have choice?—except this ignores the fact that many Ontarians don't have any other options. Two thirds of Ontarians do not currently have a workplace pension plan, and personal savings are not enough to fill the gap.

The Canadian pension system was designed to stand on three pillars that are intended to provide reliable retirement security across the country. Pillar 1 is univer-



sal government benefits for seniors, also known as Old Age Security, or OAS; the Guaranteed Income Supplement, or GIS; and the Ontario Guaranteed Annual Income System, or GAINS. Together, these three programs provide guaranteed income to all seniors to ensure at least a minimum standard of living. Pillar 2 is the Canada Pension Plan, or CPP, which provides a reliable benefit to all Canadian workers. Pillar 3 is employment pension plans and individual retirement savings. But the third pillar is failing us.

As the prevalence of workplace pension plans continues to decrease, a greater reliance on individual retirement savings is being used to fill the gap. The problem is, private options that are halved by fees are failing Ontarians too. These private plans were never intended to take over the role of the third pillar entirely. They are simply meant to supplement, and we want to make sure that this government understands that.

We appreciate some of the rhetoric that we have heard from the government about addressing retirement security in Ontario, but as usual, their actions don't quite reflect their words, so we have some concerns.

So far, we have seen two budgets and a bill on the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan and still we haven't seen half the details that the government has provided for the PRPPs. The government has made it a priority to pass their private options before we break for summer, but the public plan won't see the light of day until 2017.

But perhaps the government just has some free time on their legislative agenda right now since they've managed to squeeze public hearings on their budget, which includes the privatization of one of Ontario's largest public assets, into four days of hearings in Toronto. I guess getting PRPPs out the door is a bigger priority for the government than open dialogue and public consultation. So, Mr. Speaker, we have some concerns.

The bill we are debating today at third reading is substantively the same bill we debated a few months ago at second reading, so we will attempt to address a number of the issues that the government continues to ignore and we will continue to try and point their priorities on a more progressive path. Ontario is experiencing a retirement security crisis and we are here to remind the government that they need to put all their energy into plans that solely benefit pensioners if they want to find a real solution.

So far I have spoken a little about our concerns regarding the government's pension priorities, but I would like to elaborate a bit on the historical context. After years of steady prodding by labour and seniors' groups and seven federal-provincial finance ministers' meetings, the Harper government was forced to admit that Canadians were not saving enough for their retirement, and those without workplace pensions—two thirds of working Canadians—needed a safe, affordable and reliable retirement savings vehicle.

At their December 2012 meeting, federal and provincial finance ministers agreed to consider a "modest" CPP enhancement to complement the private sector PRPPs they had already endorsed at a previous meeting.

In 2012 the federal government passed PRPP legislation based on the model put forward by the life insurance industry. By 2013, however, the federal government had made it clear that it would not be proceeding with any sort of enhancement to the CPP. Not surprisingly, PRPPs became the Harper government's version of a solution to the retirement security crisis altogether.

However, because 85% of workers are provincially regulated and the fact that most federally regulated workers already have workplace pensions, those who would benefit from the sale of PRPPs began lobbying for Ontario provincial PRPP legislation to copy the federal legislation. For years the position of the Ontario Liberal government was that they would not proceed with provincial PRPP legislation, in favour of enhancing the CPP. But, as we can see, something has changed along the way and the government has shifted its priorities, whether they want us to know it or not.

Toward the end of the fall session, the government introduced two pieces of legislation related to retirement savings. In fact, Mr. Speaker, as you may recall, they even released them on the same day.

First, Bill 56, the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan Act, is the first of three pieces of legislation that will eventually comprise the ORPP. This bill is little more than a framework, mostly reiterating information that was already established during last year's budget, and provides little new or substantive policy.

Second, Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, is a fully fleshed-out piece of legislation that will allow PRPPs to hit the ground running once the bill receives royal assent. It's so clear; it's almost too transparent.

This government has gotten a lot of mileage from their claims of being progressive, but the only thing they did to put the ORPP ahead of the PRPP was list it one position higher on the order paper. As I said before, I can only imagine the strategic discussion that went on in the caucus room about making sure that the ORPP was Bill 56 instead of Bill 57.

#### 1450

If this government were truly so committed to public pensions, then that is where they would have focused their energy. PRPPs would have been an afterthought instead of the secret prize in this government's pension shell game. We've seen it far too often: The government tries to hide its true intentions on both sides, and the policy suffers as a result. In order to appease their friends on the right, the government knew they had to give PRPPs a head start on the ORPP, but to avoid compromising their progressive image, they made sure to pass something ORPP-related on the same day marginally first. Fortunately, in our parliamentary system, our job on this side of the aisle is to hold the government to account, and we're doing our best to do just that.

I would also like to elaborate on our concerns regarding PRPPs. As I noted earlier, the government loves to tout their voluntary options, but when there aren't other options available to Ontarians, we start to wonder, how voluntary is it?

The single biggest problem with private sector retirement savings plans, such as the PRPPs, are the private sector management fees. Canadians pay 2% or more for administration of their RRSPs, whereas the large public pension funds, such as CPP and OMERS, pay well less than 1% for fund administration. High fees erode returns. PRPPs are supposed to be very large funds designed to keep fees low, but the legislation leaves the setting of acceptable fees to regulation.

The CPP Investment Board, like the large provincial public sector workplace pension plans, has managed to keep administration costs very low. This makes them a better sponsor than the insurance industry and banks for a retirement savings vehicle.

As I stated earlier, across a lifetime, the difference is immense, and we don't want to see Ontarians losing half of their retirement savings to bank and insurance fees.

While I've got some time, I would like to address one issue that we have discussed on countless occasions at least one more time while we're here today, and that is the issue of comparability. The first concern that we had about PRPPs was whether they would be considered comparable and subsequently exempt from the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan. I asked the question more than a few times during question period, but both the Minister of Finance and the associate minister responsible for the ORPP were not willing to give a concrete on-the-record answer. After the third try, I submitted my question on the order paper and anxiously awaited the government's response.

To my colleagues with a little more experience than I have, this was a learning experience for me. I learned that the government has a fairly lengthy period of time to respond to order paper questions, and, more importantly, I learned that the government makes use of that time in its entirety.

After submitting my question in November, I finally received my answer in late February, two days before their answer was due. With that much time to prepare, I expected that the answer that I received would be definitive and comprehensive.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It wasn't?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It wasn't. But that's jumping ahead. I'd like to read that answer to you here today, and I'll let you all judge whether you feel that those adjectives accurately reflect the response that I received.

I'll start with my question: "Enquiry of the ministry: Will the Associate Minister of Finance responsible for the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan clarify whether PRPPs will be considered comparable and will employees of employers enrolled in PRPPs be exempted from the automatic enrollment provisions of the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan?" Pretty straightforward, I thought.

Their response, which I would like to read into the record: "On December 17, 2014, the government released a discussion paper that set out its preferred approach on key design features of the ORPP, including the definition of a comparable plan.

"As stated in the discussion paper, the preferred approach is to define comparable plans as defined benefit

(DB) and target benefit (TB) multi-employer pension plans (MEPPs) as these plans closely align with the key features of the ORPP and the CPP.

"The government recognizes that voluntary savings mechanisms, like PRPPs, will also play an important role in strengthening the retirement income system. As the minister has previously stated, our current view"—I'll say that again—"our current view is that these vehicles are complementary and will not be considered comparable.

"The government is currently reviewing submissions from the consultation process. Final decisions on this and other key design features will be outlined in the future."

Just to revisit: As it says in the letter—"currently." As you can see, the government, as usual, has been rather careful with their language. In more ways than I can count, they leave their position open-ended and down-right malleable. That is not to say that we expect the government to have all of the details of the ORPP set and ready at this moment. This is not a logistical question; it is a question of intentions; it is a question of priorities; it is a question of whether the government is more concerned with making the plan as strong as possible or giving themselves some wiggle room on the right.

If this government wanted to give pension security a real chance, they would have waited to introduce new private plans. I guess it comes down to priorities.

We will continue to hold the government to account so that these sorts of concessions are not made and Ontarians receive the most progressive plan possible going forward.

Mr. Speaker, as we've noted before, we also question the validity of the government's claim that PRPPs close a gap in the existing pension framework. Over the past six months, the government has spoken at length about the importance of voluntary options, but this does not take into account the fact that a multitude of voluntary options already exist. Whether it be RRSPs, TFSAs, ETFs or any other financial acronym you can think of, PRPPs are not so much filling an existing gap as piling into an already crowded space.

To illustrate this point, I would like to return to an interesting article I came across a few months ago on this topic. The article is by Greg Hurst, a Vancouver-based pension consultant with Greg Hurst and Associates Ltd., and it is titled, "Does Anyone Need a PRPP?"

"The early bloom on the PRPP rosebush was that employers could provide a retirement program while at the same time avoiding fiduciary responsibility. This bloom soon withered as most commentators observed that employers would still have responsibility for selecting and monitoring a PRPP provider (which activities may have fiduciary characteristics), and this doesn't seem much different from existing responsibilities relating to group RRSPs or DC plans."

The article finishes by summarizing this point quite well: "As long as DC pension plans, deferred profit-sharing plans and RRSPs are available and there is no mandatory requirement for an employer to implement a



pension plan, nobody needs a PRPP. I suspect nobody will want them either.”

There is little to support the government’s claim that PRPPs will fill a gap in the retirement security system, and we are left to question their true motives for bringing this bill forward. We agree that Ontario has a retirement savings crisis, but the answer is not yet another private sector savings vehicle. To illustrate this point, Mr. Speaker, allow me to share some of the numbers on RRSPs in Canada: \$683.6 billion—that number is the total unused RRSP contribution room as of 2011; 24%—that’s the percentage of eligible tax filers who contributed to an RRSP in 2011; 22.7 million—that is the number of Canadians with RRSP contribution room in 2011. So as you can see, the RRSP system is not stretched in our country.

In 2012, in my riding of Oshawa, 95% of those aged 65 or older received income from CPP but only 9.4% received income from an RRSP.

Canadians now contribute about \$40 billion annually to their RRSPs, but that still leaves an estimated \$80 billion in RRSP tax deferral room that has not been taken up.

RRSPs play an important role in our retirement savings, but the vast majority of Canadians continue to have ample room available for additional savings, yet the government continues to tell us that PRPPs are a needed addition. Mr. Speaker, we beg to differ.

In conclusion, our opposition to Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, comes down to insincerity and misplaced priorities by the government. When the government speaks about pensions, they speak about public plans that benefit pensioners, but when it comes to legislation, they put private options first.

As I stated earlier, there is nothing wrong with voluntary savings options, but there is something wrong with the way this government has been trying to sell them. The fact is that we are all here for one reason, and that is to serve the people of Ontario. But Bill 57 will sell them a watered-down retirement.

1500

Two thirds of Ontarians currently do not have a workplace pension, and that gap cannot be filled by private options that will see half of their retirement savings eroded by fees. There are no employer obligations to contribute to PRPPs. Workers are pretty much on their own in terms of contributions. There is no defined or even target benefit with PRPPs. Workers end up with whatever the market returns are on their cumulative contributions when they retire. So I guess they just need to cross their fingers.

There are questions, too: Will the banks and insurance firms who administer PRPPs be permitted to invest the funds in all those investment products that they sell themselves? It’s a pretty big question.

The NDP supports the idea of public pensions. That’s why we proposed one for Ontario in 2010. The NDP supports progressive public programs. We don’t, however, and never will support Harper-style pooled retirement pension plans.

Speaker, I’ve said it before: Banks and insurance companies are not planning to retire any time soon. But workers are retiring every day, and we want to ensure that when they do retire, they are able to do so with dignity.

If our job as members of provincial Parliament is to represent the interests of Ontarians, then the government is not doing its job with this bill, and that is why I can’t support it. As always, it has been my honour to rise in this Legislature and speak on behalf of my constituents as the member of provincial Parliament for Oshawa, and on behalf of all Ontarians as the NDP’s critic for pensions. As New Democrats, we have always and will always believe that all Ontarians should have access to a strong defined-benefit pension plan. And for those who don’t have one, it is our duty as representatives of this province to provide it.

Ontarians are facing real challenges. Precarious employment, a rising cost of living and a declining median income all contribute to the growing instability that has become the norm for too many families. And it has made it nearly impossible to adequately save for retirement. We ask that the government take this opportunity to focus their energy on these people, on these families, on them, to act on their behalf and to prioritize a solution that puts pensioners first. We implore this government to design and implement a progressive public pension plan for hard-working people across Ontario who deserve one. Stop focusing on exceptions and exemptions, and start focusing on helping more Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I’m pleased to speak to third reading of Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. First and foremost I want to say that I’m pleased to be supporting this. Unlike the ORPP that the government introduced, the PRPP is voluntary and it’s low-cost, two of the key tenets that people in my riding have asked to make sure of when we’re thinking of a pension plan.

PRPPs are similar to a defined contribution plan, and employer contributions are not mandatory—again, a key feature, Mr. Speaker. They would be offered to anyone working in Ontario, including the self-employed. I hear this from a lot of people, certainly in your riding and my riding. A lot of self-employed people think this is a good way to go. It’s something they want to have in front of them, and certainly prefer it much more than they do the ORPP introduced by the government. It’s available to all of those who are not covered by the current federal PRPP.

I want to extend a commendation to our pension critic and MPP for York—Simcoe, Julia Munro, who championed the PRPP in our Paths to Prosperity white papers. For almost three years, she, on behalf of our PC Party, had been advocating for such a pension plan. She also introduced Bill 50, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, in 2013. It was referred to committee after second

reading; however, it died on the order paper. So again, accolades to her for continuing to bring this forward on behalf of the people of Ontario first and foremost, but also on behalf of our PC caucus. As such, our party has been on the forefront in promoting and advocating for people to have options for retirement savings such as those offered with these pooled retirement pension plans.

As we learned back in 2013 through our party's research and consultations, only about 40% of Canadians are members of a workplace pension plan and only 30% are saving on their own through RRSPs. So a vehicle like this certainly provides an opportunity for people to have that flexibility without it being mandatory.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business says that almost 80% of small businesses in Canada don't offer company pension plans. That is why the PRPP is a pension plan that many people want, particularly middle-income Ontarians who do not have sufficient savings and investments to guarantee a decent income and quality of life for their retirement. It's no surprise that pooled registered pension plans are supported by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Certificated General Accountants of Ontario, Sun Life Financial and the Association of Canadian Pension Management, to name a few.

My colleagues and I support the move to give Ontarians the right to choose how they save for retirement. That's one of the key tenets of this. It gives the individual person, and also gives an individual company and the owners of that company, the right to choose how they wish to save for their retirement. It's not something that's being dictated by a government that doesn't necessarily understand the needs, the wants or the wishes, or most importantly the ability, of people to pay into such a plan.

For clarification, I want to talk a little bit about the Liberals' ORPP, which I referenced earlier. It is in stark contrast to the PRPP. The ORPP, which has been given royal assent, is not necessarily supported by a large consensus of the business community, or by workers I have talked to. The one thing I want to reiterate here, for the people listening and those at home who will read this later in Hansard, is that with the ORPP no one is going to receive any funds for 40 years. It's being very liberal that the Liberals can actually manage a fund of this magnitude. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, that is a real stretch.

This whole ORPP, in our opinion, was not thought out well. There are many questions remaining. How much is it going to cost? I don't just mean financial cost to the individual or the company. What's the cost to our province long-term? How many jobs is this going to take out of our economy, and what is the spin-off effect to our whole society? Who is compelled to participate? They can't answer those types of things. Who is going to be exempt? Those are the questions I receive every day in my riding from people in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. They are saying to me, "Bill, how can the government roll out a plan—actually steamroll it through the Legislature through legislation—and they can't even answer two simple questions: Who is compelled, and who is exempt?"

What is the impact on the employer? I don't think this was given much thought. Most of the employers in my riding who have talked to me said, "We had no insight into this. We had no ability to have impact on this." What is the impact for a small mom-and-pop shop or a middle-sized business? What is the overall impact going to be to them? Some have said to me that they have been giving their employees RRSP contributions in the range of 4% to 6%. They're not certain whether they're going to be able to continue that if this 1.9% is going to be rolled in on top of that.

In fact, that employee may actually receive less in future, because that company—higher energy rates and the cost of the red tape that is being imposed on them by this government are just continually eating away at the disposable income they have. So they're saying it might end up that an employer who right now is dedicating 4% to 6% to an RRSP is going to get the 1.9% that's mandated—they don't even have a choice in this. That's a huge outcome.

The other is the impact on jobs. We've heard from a number of credible agencies, in regard to the ORPP, that there are going to be thousands and thousands of jobs lost if this thing actually sees the light of day, and it seems that the government is intent on rolling it through. Frankly, after a series of spending scandals under this Liberal government, everyone fears, doubts and questions whether the Liberals have the ability to manage their hard-earned wages.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, on a personal side, I don't believe that anyone trusts this Liberal government with any financial acumen.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** I don't.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Certainly Michael Harris from Kitchener-Conestoga doesn't—the billions they have wasted and the record debt and deficit they have created under their 12-year reign of terror.

As I said, the single biggest difference between the two pension bills is that the ORPP is mandatory income contributions from millions of Ontario workers and employers: 1.9% from the employer and 1.9% from the employee. That's on top of the existing CPP: 4.95% from the employer, and another 4.95% from the employee, and EI deductions. And it replicates the current Canada Pension Plan.

As I've said on behalf of small business, when you factor in the rising cost of energy—it has quadrupled under this government, and they're saying it's going to double and triple again in the next four years; and nothing in sight says that's going to slow down—the red tape and all the money wasted that could be going into small business, they're really starting to see the consequences of the actions over the last 12 years. They're very, very concerned.

I want to turn back to the PRPP. What I like about it, and as has been stated by the member from Simcoe, is that it's voluntary, it's portable and it does not threaten to kill jobs, reduce business investment and destabilize our financial sector or household finances. One thing Ms.



Munro said, and that I believe strongly, is that it actually allows people to be responsible for their own actions, for their own retirement. Again, that's what the folks in my riding of Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound are saying

1510

"I run a business. I've raised a family. I've done very well for myself. Why can't the government just get out of the way and let me manage for my own purposes? Why can it not be something that we can buy into on a voluntary basis? Why are they coming and tying me with the ORPP? 'You shall do this and you shall listen to us,' despite the incredibly poor track record over their 12 years of record debt, record deficit, which is only going one way, and that continues to be higher and higher spiralling debt costs to our economy."

I want to just reiterate that it's certainly a type of pension plan that is similar to a defined contribution plan. They're completely voluntary. Employer contributions are not mandatory and, therefore, PRPPs are supported by business owners. If I was the government on the other side that had a majority, I would have been rolling this out. I would have said that this is my first priority, because you would have had a lot better buy-in from the public, and certainly from small and medium-sized businesses.

We believe fundamentally that Ontarians have a right to choose how they save for their retirement. PRPPs would be offered to anyone working in Ontario and, as I mentioned earlier, specifically the self-employed. Those are the folks out there who take all the risks. They go out every day, based on their abilities, their belief in our great province and their own self-directed abilities to go out and take risks. They want to go out and be entrepreneurs and drive our economy, which is really how it happens. They're not expecting a safety net. They're not getting up every morning thinking, "Someone else has to take care of me." They're saying, "I'm prepared to do that." All they want is a vehicle, like this PRPP, which is voluntary and flexible to meet the needs that they wish to choose.

As I mentioned earlier, they're portable between jobs and employers, making it easy to continue contributing at a new job, and it's a convenient pension plan.

In 2012, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter to the Finance Minister Dwight Duncan calling on the government to introduce legislation to implement PRPPs: "We hope you believe, as we do, that PRPPs will help strengthen the retirement income system in Ontario."

Again in 2012, the CFIB submitted a letter to Finance Minister Dwight Duncan urging him "to move quickly to implement pooled registered pension plans in your province. We further ask you to avoid increasing Canada Pension Plan premiums at this time..."

PRPPs "address some of the problems with current pension tools by promoting lower fees and by shifting the administrative burden from employers to financial institutions. In addition to lower fees, employee plans will also benefit from the fact that, unlike contributions to

employee RRSP plans, employer contributions PRPPs will not attract additional payroll taxes like EI, CPP and WSIB premiums."

The PRPP, as I've mentioned a number of times, is voluntary. We support it, Mr. Speaker, and certainly hope that the government will make sure that it is enacted in a timely manner for the benefit of all Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I will try to add a few minutes of my voice to this debate, third reading of pooled registered pension plans. Really, there's a pension plan only in the title. We're not really talking about pension plans. We are talking about an investment instrument, but an investment instrument that will have a power that no other investments have. They will the power to take money off your cheque, whether you want to or not. How will that work? Quite simply: Your employer will decide that they will be part of this with Manulife, any bank or insurance company; you name it. The employer doesn't have to put a single cent—zero—into the pension plan, but once they've signed up, you as the worker are on the hook to pay.

I can just see this already. The employers are off the hook. They don't have to pay a cent into this. The different banks and insurance companies will be fighting one another to get the businesses. Think: probably bonuses to those employers. So not only does your employer not have to pay, there's a good chance he's going to have some kind of a kickback or return or bonus for having signed up with this insurance company rather than that one, and you will be on the hook for paying. But you won't have a pension plan; you will have an investment. How much will you be getting once you retire? Nobody will ever be able to tell you till the day it actually happens.

How do you plan for a part of your life that is so critical, the part of your life where you go from being employed and receiving a paycheck every week, two weeks, every month, going into a part of your life where you may not be able to work anymore, not knowing how much money you will live on?

I come from Sudbury. I represent the riding of Nickel Belt. We are very, very privileged that most of the retired people in my riding are retired from the two big mines. They used to be called Inco and Falconbridge. They have changed names three or four times. They're now called Vale and Sudbury Integrated Nickel Operations. But the pensioners knew—they knew the first day at work, the last day at work—exactly how much money they were going to have.

My father-in-law was retired for over 37 years. But because they knew how much money they had coming in every month, they budgeted. They budgeted so that they would make the money last. They knew exactly how much was coming in. They knew what they could and could not afford. They knew how much debt they could—and she is 92 years old; my father-in-law passed away, but she has a survivor's pension, my mother-in-

law. She lived through the Depression. She knows how to budget. They made sure that they made their money last. But they knew this all along. They knew when he retired and they knew five years before he retired how much money they would have. So they knew that they were not able to buy this car or move the house or do this, but they also knew what they were able to do. This is what a defined benefit pension plan allows you to do: It allows you to plan your life in a way that is fiscally responsible.

None of this is what we're talking about today. What we're talking about today is that you have the choice to make investments. We all have the choice to make investments right now. You can go to any bank, *caisse populaire*—you name it—and they will be quite happy to sell you an instrument, an investment that you can collect once you retire. That's all that does. It allows you to invest in something that you will use once you are retired, except that the government puts its finger into it, which means that it takes away your choice. It means that whether you want to or not, whether you have a better investment with your own investment counsellor or whether you are in a position to do something different, you won't have a choice. The government is giving those insurance companies, those banks, the right to come and take money right off your cheque. All they have to do is get the sign-off from your employer, and this is it. The employer is off the hook, doesn't have to match, doesn't have to give you a single cent, but you have to participate in this.

And if you find that the return on investment is really crummy and that you're able to do way better elsewhere, sorry; you can't get out of there. Your employer has signed that you have to continue to invest in this, not knowing what you're going to get at the end. And even if you do know what you're getting, even if you're able to do better, you're not going to be allowed to do that. It gives no security at the end so that you can budget what your retirement income is going to look like, what your life in retirement is going to look like. You will know this the day that you're retired and you sit down and they do the calculation—not a good way forward, Speaker.

A good way forward is to have a good defined benefit pension plan like so many people in my riding have. Their pensions are not big, but they knew how much it was going to be. It's steady. Every month it comes. It increases a tiny wee bit just about once a year. I have over 23,000 people in my riding who, every month, get that cheque. They balance with it. It changes everything to have a steady stream of income through retirement. It changes people's lives for the better. They are able to live their retirement years in dignity and they are able to make plans that make sense because they know how much will come. With those financial instruments, none of that is there. If the markets tank, so does your retirement income. If you happen to retire at a bad time—you may have thought you would have \$2,000 or \$3,000 a month coming in, and it's down to \$500 or \$700 a month. You have no way of knowing what will be coming to you. This is not a good plan.

1520

It is insulting to call this a pension plan, because it is not a pension plan; it's an investment instrument that your employer will force you to put money into and over which you will have no control whatsoever. You won't control how much you'll put in. You won't control what kind of risk you want. You won't control how much you will get back. You won't control any of that. All you can control is whether you want to continue working for that employer or not. That's not a choice, Speaker. Nobody has those kinds of choices. Once you have a job, you hold onto it the best you can. This is a real insult to the two thirds of workers in Ontario who do not have a pension plan and who want and need a pension plan.

If you want to see what defined benefit pension plans look like, come into my community. Come into the retirement homes that we have. Come and see the difference it makes when seniors don't live in poverty. It changes everything. It shows a community that has dignity, that has respect. This is not going to do any of that. It is a real shame that this is what this government is bringing forward. We need better than this. I expect better than that for the people of Ontario. To me, this is a real letdown. I could never vote for something like this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I am pleased to rise in this Legislature to add to some of the comments that have already been made by my colleagues the member for Oshawa and the member for Nickel Belt, expressing some of the concerns that we have on this side of the House with this legislation, Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act. As has already been pointed out, to include the word "pension" in the title of this act is disingenuous at best. This is not a pension. This is not a solution to the retirement crisis that is facing people in Ontario and across Canada.

I have previously shared with MPPs in this House some of the statistics that are coming out of my community of London. The most recent report, the Vital Signs report from the London Community Foundation, found that we have experienced a 300% increase in the poverty rate among seniors in London between 2010 and 2011. We are seeing dramatic increases in poverty across this province among seniors. We heard in December 2014, in the Hunger Report from the Ontario Association of Food Banks, that seniors and university students are two of the fastest-growing groups of food bank users in this province. So we know that more and more seniors are unable to retire in dignity and are forced to live in poverty once they finish working.

Also in my community, we are looking at a poverty rate that is almost 32% higher than the national average, so poverty is very real to the constituents that I represent in London West. In particular, it is very real to seniors.

As the women's issues critic for the NDP caucus, I want to speak a little bit about the impact of poverty and the lack of real retirement security programs on women. Seniors in this province are predominantly female. We know that women live longer than men. When you go



into any nursing home, any retirement home, you will see that a much greater proportion of residents are women, in particular among the oldest age groups. We also know that for senior women who are single, who are living alone, they are twice as likely, compared to senior men, to be living in poverty. They are much more reliant on income security programs like OAS, GIS and GAINS, much less likely to have a pension income from their time in the workforce, and very likely—almost a third of elderly women in this province who are on their own live below the poverty line.

Just last week, we heard another report from the United Way showing that about 52% of workers—the majority, in fact—in the GTA and Hamilton area are now working in precarious jobs. People who are working in precarious jobs, who are working in part-time, contract or temporary positions, cannot afford to put money aside for retirement. This Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, comparable to an RRSP or other kinds of private financial products that people can purchase to support them in retirement, is not the solution to ensure that seniors can live their final years in dignity.

New Democrats are very concerned about a plan that does not provide a defined benefit, that has no employer contribution whatsoever and that is voluntary for participation. As has been said by others of my colleagues, this is not the way to provide a life of dignity for our seniors in this province, and New Democrats will continue to oppose this legislation as we reach the end of this third reading debate.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to stand in this place, but not really an honour to speak to this bill. But it is an honour to speak on behalf of the NDP caucus on Bill 57, the Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act.

The first thing that's wrong with this bill is the fact that it's called a pension plan, because it's not a pension plan. If you will remember back to the last election, one of the promises in the Liberal campaign was an Ontario pension plan, because the CPP wasn't working—it was working, but it wasn't big enough, and they were sick of waiting for the feds, which we are as well, and they were going to institute it themselves.

So they've put one like that and then they've put one like this, which isn't a pension plan; it's basically an RRSP. Really, the goal of this plan, I think, is to confuse people, because they think that this is a pension plan, and it's not a pension plan. When people think of a pension plan, they think, "Okay, we're going to get so much a month." That's a defined benefit pension plan. That's what people think of when you say "pension plan." When you think of an RRSP, nobody thinks that there's going to be a guarantee of so much money; it depends on how much money you put in. But when you say "pension plan," that's what you have in the back of your mind.

When people read this, and, "The government is moving on the pension plan," in fact, they're not. They're not. The idea that this is going to create more pension benefits isn't accurate either, because even if you look at

RRSPs, right now Canadians contribute \$40 billion annually to RRSPs, but there's \$80 billion left in RRSP contribution room. So it's not that this bill is going to make retirement any easier for anyone. What this bill basically does is it pools the plans. So you can use this as a vehicle, for those who have the money to put it in, and depending on what the market does is what you will have at the end. Doesn't that sound amazingly like an RRSP? That's basically, folks at home, what this is. It's not, as the member from London West said, really a pension plan, and as the member from Nickel Belt stated very well. In Nickel Belt, they know the difference between an actual defined benefit pension plan and a savings plan. She did a very good job of explaining that people who have been fortunate enough to work in sectors that have defined benefit pension plans actually have a cushion in their retirement that they can depend on, so they can actually live in dignity. This does not guarantee that in any way, shape or form.

**1530**

So there are definitely differences of opinion on whether this is a good thing or a bad thing. We don't think it does the job. The Liberals seem to think so; the Conservatives are in favour. More power to them. If they actually were up front with what this is—it's a group RRSP, basically. That's what this legislation is: a group RRSP. If they called it that and didn't have it masquerading as a pension plan, it might be worth debating further.

This is not a pension plan, and that is why, Speaker, we will remain opposed to it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

Pursuant to the order of the House dated April 16, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Sousa has moved third reading of Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

I wish to inform the House that I have received a deferral notice from the chief government whip asking that the vote on this matter be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

#### AGRICULTURE INSURANCE ACT (AMENDING THE CROP INSURANCE ACT, 1996), 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ASSURANCE AGRICOLE (MODIFIANT LA LOI DE 1996 SUR L'ASSURANCE-RÉCOLTE)

Mr. Leal moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I assume the minister would want to lead off the debate?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on third reading of Bill 40, the Agriculture Insurance Act. I'll be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Beaches–East York, Mr. Arthur Potts.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That agricultural mecca.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I thank my good friend from Barry's Bay for the intervention on that.

I want to thank Mr. Potts for shepherding this important bill through committee. I'd also like to acknowledge the contributions from the agriculture critic for the official opposition, the honourable gentleman from Haldimand–Norfolk, and the agriculture critic from the third party, the honourable gentleman from Timiskaming–Cochrane.

We had two excellent days of committee hearings. I want to thank all committee members and the presenters who took time to appear before the committee as part of the review process. This was a productive conversation during those hearings, and I want to thank everyone for their detailed participation.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario's farmers grow and harvest a diverse range of crops and livestock. When unforeseen challenges such as pests, weather and disease strike, production insurance is there to provide coverage for losses and, indeed, yield reductions. In Ontario, production insurance is currently available for nearly 90 crops and perennial plants, but Ontario farmers grow and raise more than 200 commodities. This leaves some farmers' products ineligible for this very valuable and important coverage.

Production insurance is important because it protects our farmers and our valuable agricultural sector, a sector that I'm proud to say contributes more than \$34.8 billion to the GDP of the province of Ontario. It's a growing sector and a sector that we want to support, because we grow benefits for our entire province.

In 2013, when she was also Minister of Agriculture and Food, Premier Wynne issued the agri-food growth challenge. It calls on our sector to double our annual rate of growth and create 120,000 new jobs by 2020. This challenge recognizes the significant growth opportunities that this sector has to offer. It's an ambitious target, but I have every confidence in our ability to meet it together. As Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, I'm fully committed to growing Ontario's agri-food sector and meeting the Premier's challenge.

The agricultural sector is a cornerstone of employment and economic growth for our great province. Expanding production insurance in Ontario would help us create a business environment that encourages this important growth. When farmers know that they are financially

protected, they have the confidence to reinvest in their businesses. Expanding production insurance in Ontario will help our farmers compete.

Currently, Ontario is the only province in Canada without the authority to offer production insurance plans for a full range of agricultural products and producers, which means farmers in the rest of Canada have an advantage over ours at this particular time. If we want to encourage growth in this sector and make our agri-food processors stronger, we need to give them the necessary tools.

To create future opportunities for growth, farmers need business supports that allow them to compete in national and international markets. Farmers and agri-food innovators are evolving with the industry, and government policy must evolve in order to help them succeed.

Mr. Speaker, expanding our production insurance program will also help us responsibly manage the province's finances. When producers suffer losses and don't have production insurance coverage, it puts pressure on the province to respond with direct or ad hoc programming. We've seen ad hoc programs cost Ontario millions of dollars in a single year, as those programs are funded solely by the provincial government. It takes time to set up ad hoc programs, meaning farmers have to wait to get access to much-needed funds.

Production insurance is much more predictable than ad hoc programs. Premiums for production insurance are shared between the producers, the provincial government and the federal government. All stakeholders involved have an interest in seeing well-developed, properly administered production insurance plans.

If passed, Bill 40 would allow for improved financial responsibility, with no immediate cost to the provincial government. In a time of increasing fiscal prudence, production insurance, as we would say in Peterborough county, just makes good sense.

As I've said, premiums for crop insurance are shared by the government of Canada, the province of Ontario and, indeed, the producers themselves. If the bill is passed, the production insurance plans we develop would be created through appropriate and thorough consultation. Our plans must reflect and meet the needs of the farmers they're intended to protect. Should the bill pass, specifics of future plans will be discussed when there's demand from the industry to initiate conversations.

1540

The proposed amendment was debated in this House for more than 11 hours, and of all 79 members who spoke on the bill, covering both sides of the House, no one spoke against it. That means we have a consensus that's being developed right here in this House. Many members on both sides made the point that this is a change past due. It's time to level the playing field for our great farmers in the province of Ontario.

As my colleague, the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane, Mr. Vanthof, said after first reading of the bill, expanded production insurance “will mean the difference between paying the bills and losing the farm” for many of our very important producers.



Mr. Speaker, if passed, expanded production insurance would create the opportunity to develop plans for farmers who produce agricultural products other than crops and perennial plants. It will give farmers access to the protection they need to safeguard their very important investments.

The proposed legislation would not only help producers manage risks; it would also free up producers' resources, encouraging greater innovation, profitability and job creation in the agri-food sector.

Expanded production insurance will help more farmers deal with losses from natural events, encourage growth in Ontario's agri-food sector and allow our farmers to compete fairly with farmers in other provinces and indeed on an international basis.

Ontario's agricultural sector: 52,000 farms producing over 200 commodities and supporting 780,000 jobs each and every day. This is a very important sector of Ontario's economy. A sector of this value is worth protecting through this bill.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll turn it over to my parliamentary assistant.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? The member for Beaches–East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, Speaker, and thank you, Minister Leal. Thank you for the great work you do in your riding of Peterborough and representing rural Ontario in your capacity as the minister on that portfolio and bringing this very important piece of legislation, which we know farmers across Ontario—agricultural specialists—have been asking for for years. So thank you for introducing it and bringing it to this stage.

I do, of course, represent the great riding of Beaches–East York, which has a fantastic agricultural history. Just recently, my partner and I bought a wonderful house, which was one of the original farmhouses in Beaches–East York at a time when there was acreage of land around us. I'm very much looking forward to moving into that space and continuing somewhat of an agriculture tradition in the Beaches.

I'm pleased today to speak to this third reading of Bill 40, the Agriculture Insurance Act. It was a pleasure for me to take the bill through committee. We had good conversations about how we can use this tool to strengthen our agricultural industry. I, too, would like to thank all of the colleagues and our stakeholders who took part in the committee hearings.

We had two excellent days of hearings for Bill 40: one day in Toronto and the other in Guelph. Guelph, of course, is a central location for so many of our commodity groups and our stakeholders, so we knew it was important to bring the hearings to them there. At those hearings, we talked about what expanded production insurance will mean for farmers and how it will help our valuable agricultural sector.

Production insurance is an exceptionally important tool for local Ontario farmers. It's a risk management tool that all farmers need but that not that all farmers can access. Expanding production insurance in Ontario would be a huge benefit to all of the farmers in our province.

As Minister Leal has said, the predictability of expanded production insurance would allow our province to budget for our portion of the premiums and to provide quick access to funds when our farmers need them. Instead of an unanticipated ad hoc program that's costing the province millions of dollars, we can provide appropriate coverage through production insurance in a predictable way and share the cost between the farmers, the provincial government and the federal government.

I think it's important to note that production insurance encourages good management practices. Lorne Small from the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario spoke at our committee hearing in Guelph, and he made this point very, very well. You do not want to jeopardize your ability to make a claim when you need to. It's like having house insurance. You don't leave an unattended pot on a stove and risk a house fire just because you know that insurance will cover your losses.

Scott Persall of the Grain Farmers of Ontario also spoke at committee hearings. He made the point that expanded production insurance gives farmers confidence to reinvest in their farms. This is an extremely important concept to remember. Expanding production insurance helps farmers reinvest in their families and their futures. It helps them look at new ways of growing their businesses and creating more jobs in the agri-food sector. Production insurance isn't just good for our farmers; it's good for our economy, too.

We also heard from Amy Cronin of Ontario Pork, who, in responding to a direct question from me during the committee hearings in Guelph when I asked her if the bill is right the way it is now or if we need amendments, was absolutely crystal clear that the bill in its current form meets all the objectives we need of it and she was very, very supportive.

Our goal with this proposed amendment to the Crop Insurance Act is to make the legislation as all-encompassing as possible. We want it to work for our farmers. Putting emphasis on one commodity or one type of peril over another simply limits the scope of crop insurance. We want now to ensure that the legislation will allow all our farmers to play on a level playing field.

When production insurance was first introduced in 1960, we had less than 10 plans in operation. Today it's just shy of 90. Now is the time for us to expand the number of plans and offer much-needed protection that our producers are asking for. We've heard from our colleagues on the other side of the House and from producers that an expansion of production insurance is long overdue. So let's rectify that situation.

Developing production insurance in Ontario has been an evolutionary process, the concept having been in place since the 1960s, and in that time the plans available to our farmers have grown and changed. Expanding production insurance now is the next step in that evolution. There is a national framework for production insurance, but within that framework provinces have the flexibility to create plans that meet the needs of the farmers on a commodity-by-commodity basis in the provinces they represent.

Production insurance is based on four key principles.

The first principle is shared program costs and participation by both the federal government and provincial governments as well as the producers. The premiums are shared on a 36%-40%-24% basis by the federal government, the farmers and the provincial government respectively. No one stakeholder decides how the plans are designed. It's a collaborative process.

The second principle is voluntary participation. Farmers choose whether or not to enrol; the plans are not mandatory. Producers choose the parameters of the plan that make the most sense to their individual business requirements, and just like you choose a deductible on your car insurance, they will pick a plan and make it work for them.

The third principle is administration by the provincial government and not the federal government. Decisions about the plans are made locally by the people who understand local market conditions and local challenges.

Finally, actuarial soundness, the most important principle: Plans are designed to provide coverage that farmers need when they need it.

If Bill 40 is passed, any plans we create would be based on those same key principles. Allowing more products to be covered by production insurance would also fulfil a commitment we made to Ontario farmers under the Growing Forward 2 agreement in 2013. Growing Forward 2, as you know, is a five-year policy framework for our national agricultural and agri-food sector. The program is a federal, provincial and territorial investment. It's the basis for government agricultural programs and services.

When Growing Forward 2 was established in 2013, the federal and provincial governments created a protocol that said we would work to introduce production insurance plans for livestock. We said that we would move towards addressing agricultural risks through insurance-based solutions, and passing this bill helped us make good on that promise. Today we're taking a step forward and making good on our commitment by continuing the evolution of production insurance in Ontario.

At our committee hearings we heard from the commodity groups, farming organizations and so many others who have an interest in seeing this bill enacted. Representatives from Ontario Pork, the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the Grain Farmers of Ontario all presented at the public hearings, and they offered us excellent input on how we could make potential future plans work if this bill is passed.

Our MPPs and our commodity groups all see the value in expanding production insurance. When the bill was debated in the House, as Minister Leal noted, not a single person spoke against it, but we heard lots of opinions and had good conversations at our hearings, and everyone who spoke about this bill, whether they were an MPP or a stakeholder, agreed this was an important and valuable amendment and everyone knew we should act now to pass this legislation. Passing the bill would be just the

first step. If the bill is enacted, then the detailed work will begin. Requests for plans to cover other commodities will be driven by the producers in each of the sectors needing insurance.

**1550**

As we heard at the hearings, our farmers want this bill passed now, and once it is passed, they want us to invest the time it takes to get the plans right. They know that we'll work with them to iron out the details, and they want to be involved in developing those plans. We welcome that input.

Our stakeholders were also very clear at the hearings: It's not as simple as just adding a new commodity to our existing insurance plans. We need to understand the different risks each commodity faces, and we need to ensure that our entire suite of business risk management programs works well together to provide stable and predictable protection.

Bill 40 is an important piece of enabling legislation that helps our government support our entire agricultural sector. If passed, it will encourage growth and innovation in the sector. It levels the playing field to allow our farmers to compete fairly in national and international markets, and it helps our government with longer-term fiscal responsibility. Our farmers support the bill, and our colleagues in the House support the bill. It's now time to move the bill forward so that we can start the important and intricate work of developing plans that meet the needs of farmers.

I look forward to all-party support of this bill and getting it passed as soon as is practical.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I think it's important, in this Legislative Assembly, that we are discussing issues of agriculture, food and rural affairs: issues that have certainly been discussed back to 1867, and really back to the late 1700s.

In modern society, we are so far removed from the production of food. There are a few of us here who do live on farms and deal with barns, tractors, growing crops and raising livestock. To me, the most important thing—first of all, it's very difficult to generate income from the land. It is very risky, hence the support of our party for this agricultural insurance/production insurance legislation.

Farmers—food producers—deal with so many variables. We often think of the weather, but it's not just the weather. I know that down in my riding of Haldimand-Norfolk we had frost last weekend. I saw some corn at the three- or four-leaf stage, nice and green, and the next day it was done. It was dead. A friend of mine in Haldimand county grows gigantic pumpkins. He puts an awful lot of work into these pumpkins. They were wiped out this weekend as well. Ginseng is another crop down our way, newly added to crop insurance in recent years. Ginseng got very hard hit as well.

I just want to make a point that it's as relevant today to discuss these issues in the Legislature as it was in the late 1700s.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** It's indeed an honour to stand in the House today and talk about the bill on agricultural insurance.

I remember when it was first introduced. It was with great fanfare, and it had great support because all of these new areas in farming were going to be eligible for insurance. We said at the time, of course, that the devil is in the details.

We were looking forward to the budget presentation when it came. What was it called? I think that Building Ontario Up was the name of the budget. We looked for those details in there, and they're not there. Thank you for including a lot of other people in the agricultural industry being eligible, Minister, but you have to put money behind it.

I will say to the minister that I look forward to the opportunity to finally go back to my riding and say to the farming community and the abattoir in my riding, "You know what? There's money there. There's actually money there."

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** How about I come with you?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I'd gladly appreciate that, Minister. Any time you want. But there's no money at the moment, Speaker.

The bill should be supported, because at some point down the road we hope to be able to convince the minister to, yes, indeed, empty one of those pockets. There has to be some money put into the bill so that people in the farming community can actually say, "I have insurance," because if anybody needs it, it's the farming community, all of the producers of our crops and our produce. They need to rest with the assurance that it's there.

So, Minister, whatever we can do to help you go to cabinet and get some money on the table, because you badly need it. You have to improve the bill, but we'll work with you on this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's a pleasure to rise today on behalf of my riding of Cambridge, but I also represent North Dumfries township, which is a rural community. I live in the midst of a number of different farms, and my neighbours grow crops such as cattle, sheep, soybeans, corn and mixed farming—chickens nearby. So I really understand the risks that our farmers face each and every day, and I'm very proud to support Bill 40.

Our farmers are innovative. They create jobs. They're growing Ontario's agri-food sector. By giving more producers the opportunity to access production insurance, they will be able to better manage their risk. That's very important to growing our sector. My young son came home from school the other day. He knew this already, but they were told in school that farmers feed the cities. That was an old slogan that they used to use. But there are many of our children who don't understand that our food comes from the land. We need to be able to support our farmers to do that.

An expanded production insurance program could, if passed, provide similar financial assistance, but divide the cost between the federal government, provincial government and producers in a predictable and incremental way over a much longer period of time. Ontario also made a commitment to expand the production insurance beyond crops and perennial plants when the ministry signed the federal/provincial/territorial Growing Forward 2 agreement in 2013. I'm proud that this bill will help to deliver on that commitment.

Ontario's agricultural sector has huge potential for growth, and the Agriculture Insurance Act, if passed, will allow for the growth to happen. We need to support our farmers so they can continue to increase their profitability and the agri-food sector in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? The member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's a pleasure to stand and suggest that we will be supporting this.

Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound, of course, is the beef capital of Ontario. In both Bruce and Grey, we're very proud of the roots of our agricultural industry, particularly the livestock industry.

I think farmers, every day, manage a very challenging business, a very risky business. This certainly is a great thing to help them manage that risk. I think one of the other elements might even be to encourage new farmers to get into it, knowing that they are going to go out and they're going to put all of their efforts on the line with Mother Nature still in control for the most part. To be able to know you have that ability to have insurance is certainly something that I think will help them—a huge impact to the community, the whole agricultural community, but certainly in our backyard.

The livestock industry is absolutely critical. Whether we're talking beef, whether we're talking goats, whether we're talking sheep or lambs, there are just huge opportunities. One of the things we had a couple of years ago was a lot of lambs and sheep killed as a result of predators. So, again, having that ability to know they can go into this business and things that they have no control over aren't going to take them out of business—having insurance, just like any other business, I think, is a huge step forward. It definitely provides a lot of economic spinoff to the province; it provides a lot of jobs. I applaud that we're going to actually expand to do this.

A little bit of a shout-out to the Beef Farmers of Ontario: They're going to have their annual barbecue here on the grounds of Queen's Park this Wednesday, I believe it is. That's always a crowd favourite, both for legislators, certainly, and all the staff and people in the building. It's always a great event. What better way to promote what's grown right here in Ontario and, again, in Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound? It's a huge commodity, a huge opportunity to promote, right in our own backyard, some of the best beef that you're going to find across the country, across North America. I can't say enough how proud I am. I get out and serve at our local barbecues and in my own backyard.

So I welcome everyone who's available to be here next Wednesday, and thank you for moving this forward, Minister.

1600

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs will reply.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to say thank you for the very charitable remarks this afternoon from my colleagues from Haldimand-Norfolk, Windsor-Tecumseh, Cambridge and, of course, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

The member from Haldimand-Norfolk was quite right. On May 14, we had a patchy frost right across the province of Ontario that hit a number of sectors. I was inspecting some corn just this past weekend in Peterborough county—and if you go and visit some of the municipalities that were hit by that patchy frost on May 14, you can see some of the yellowness of the sprouts that have just come out of the ground.

To my colleague from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound: We have now seen a real firming up of beef prices across the province of Ontario. I always give credit where credit is due. The federal Minister of Agriculture, Gerry Ritz, the work that he has been doing on COOL, country-of-origin labelling, which has been a long-time irritant both for Canada and Mexico—it appears that a bill may be moving through the United States Congress to repeal COOL legislation, which has been a real barrier for Canadian cattle to move south of the border to go to American feedlots and American processing operations. So we'll be happy to see that resolved without retaliatory trade measures on behalf of Canada.

To the member from Windsor-Tecumseh: Of course, I've spent some time in the wonderful city of Windsor. I'm a graduate—my second degree is in business—of the University of Windsor. I always appreciated the great agricultural sector in Essex county and that area—the home of one of the most famous agriculture ministers in the history of Canada, the late Senator Eugene Whelan, the guy who put his mark and footprint larger than life across Canada and indeed on an international basis when he had the great honour of being Canada's agriculture minister for well over 12 years. He served longer, I think, than any other individual in that position, and certainly brought great credit to agriculture both in Ontario and Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on for another hour, but you want me to sit down after two minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Actually, the House rules compel me to ask you to sit down after two minutes. At the same time, I enjoyed your comments. Thank you very much.

Further debate.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** It is important for us to continue this third reading debate and to ensure that discussions do continue in this Legislature with respect to agriculture and food issues. We are debating proposed legislation, known as Bill 40, on production insurance.

I will be sharing some of my time with the member for Leeds-Grenville, who will provide some insight on what has been happening in eastern Ontario and down Kemptville way, in that great part of the province of Ontario.

We know this Agriculture Insurance Act amends the 1996 Crop Insurance Act. Speaker, you will remember that legislation from 1996, and if you don't, the Hansard is available, which is always a valuable resource. It's a great resource for this Legislature. When people stand up and make presentations, everything is recorded, and it really provides a wonderful research tool.

I certainly remember that debate 19 years ago, and legislation that built, as was mentioned, on work going back to the 1960s. I know how risky it was farming in the 1950s and 1960s, when we didn't have these kinds of insurance programs. We did not have these kinds of risk management programs. We did not have supply management. I know that because our family had broilers. We milked cows. I had a hatching egg flock. I'm just in the process of tearing that barn down—it's one of the values of the constituency week and the availability of Amish people who know how to dismantle these gigantic 40-foot-by-70-foot barns. There are still a few of them left around in our neck of the woods.

When this legislation, this approach, was first announced in the Legislature, I raised a number of questions, one question specifically. This can be worked out down the road. Oftentimes when a new program is announced, maybe in the first year, there's a premium holiday. The early adopters will jump in. We know this with agricultural technology; I think of hybrid corn, for example. But there are those who are reticent and it's just something to consider. How do we encourage those who may not be convinced that it's worth their while to put up the money, the initial premium money, even though, as we know, it will be supported under the crop insurance model that we have through both the federal and the provincial government? So it's important to encourage farmers to buy into this new program if we can ensure that it's as good a program as it should be.

We assume that it's going to be implemented. We don't know the form. We don't know what additional agricultural commodities will be covered. All we have, really, is a piece of legislation that changes the name of the bill, changes the title. I made mention earlier that the importance of flexibility and continually adding on and improving—ginseng is a crop that came on more recently, a number of years ago. Last weekend we had a frost that killed off a lot of the ginseng. Down my way, that is a very big money crop. The prices are very good right now, and then you get hit by a frost. That's the nature of it. You get good prices and then you get wiped out by something else; perhaps it's a drought or something like that. So we can build on the experience with agricultural insurance going back to the 1960s as we go into this new approach.

We know that with any of these insurance programs, by and large, it's shared by the farmer, the provincial



government and the federal government with respect to crop insurance. The farmer pays 40%. The provincial government contributes 24%. The federal government contributes 36%. So we have that ratio: 40-24-36.

We know that in Ontario production insurance, as was just mentioned, currently is available for something like 90 commercially grown crops: obviously in the grain and oilseeds sector, corn, soybeans, winter wheat—a big participant in crop insurance—certainly fruit and vegetables, tree fruit, grapes, forage crops and the specialty crops like ginseng.

Honey, for example, is covered under crop insurance; flax is not. I received a few emails. I didn't realize that flax production was not covered by the crop insurance. So there's a bit of work to be done on the existing program, plus I consider that some fairly extensive work needs to be done to bring in a proper livestock and other commodity program, because we're opening the door, the assumption is, to hogs, cattle, sheep—again, what more do we need for bees? We hear so much about bee mortality. Beekeepers did not come forward to testify to ask for coverage for this mortality. I often wonder: Is what we've been hearing the last couple of years driven by the beekeepers or is it driven by other special interest groups perhaps making use of bee mortality for other purposes?

What about turkey and broiler operations? I think of the catastrophic losses in Oxford county.

Maple syrup: Will maple syrup be covered?

Another question: Can farmers do the paperwork themselves? How complex is this going to be? We're getting into a bit of new ground here. Do they have to hire an accountant? Many large operations have accountants anyway, but we have to make sure that this is as straightforward as possible and keep the red tape to a minimum.

1610

I did question the minister in the House formally. My question, again, was, "Will there be a premium holiday in the first year? Other questions: Will it be easy for farmers to forecast the amount and the timing of payments? Can the payments be processed rapidly to get them into the hands of farmers quickly? Will program calculations be clear and transparent? Will each participant get a detailed statement, something like, say, the income tax forms that we receive back?"

Traditionally, we think of crop insurance with respect to weather, pests, disease, and ideally it's cost-shared: producer, provincial and federal governments. The insurance model is a superior model. Whether it's government insurance or private insurance, it's superior to the ad hoc approach when disaster hits and taxpayers bail out. There really has to be participation from both sides or from all sides.

We know that farmers have requested production insurance plans beyond crops, for these additional products, and we know that Ontario, apparently, is the only province that does not have legislation enabling this to happen.

We think of some of the disasters in the past: the BSE that hit cattle wiped out half my cattle herd in Haldimand county and wiped out probably close to half of Ontario's cattle herd. And here we are now with reasonable or very good prices for cattle, and there could be a supply issue there.

Catastrophic poultry diseases like H5N2, avian flu: the recent outbreak in both turkey and broiler operations in Oxford county. And not all diseases are classified as reportable, like H5N2. If it's not classified that way, then the grower is not qualified for compensation. So will this program be able to adjust or fill in any gaps there?

We know that recently our hog industry had been hit by the PED virus. We lost something like 30% of our capacity to produce pork. Ontario Pork stressed the need for the province to take a look at mortality insurance. Again, speaking about risk management, one thing that always comes to my mind is the younger farmers, farmers I dealt with a number of years ago who were frozen out of a compensation program. This was because of a fall in hog prices back in 2007. They're still hanging out there, did not get the assistance they felt they should have received. I just received some communications about that in the last day or so.

Speaker, we went through clause-by-clause consideration of this legislation. We put forward a number of amendments; for example, that section 3 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"(8) Section 2.1 of the act is amended by adding the following subsection:

"Coverage for loss from catastrophic diseases".

Our purpose was to really stress on behalf of those sectors that have been subject to some of the losses like H5N2 that I just mentioned in Oxford county. These kinds of things make headlines around the world, and as a result you lose market around the world. Our relationship with the United States has worked out well on this one, and they've had some disastrous cases as well at the same time that we have had in Ontario. The understanding is that we can still export and import product beyond a certain zone, beyond the hot spot.

Again, it's a big hit on farmers. It's a big hit on exports. It's a big hit on our food industry. We know that the Toronto area is the largest hub for food production in North America, second only to Chicago.

In our comments on this amendment we put forward, my colleague Jim McDonnell stated, looking over the last decade or decade and a half that we've seen some of these catastrophes—the beef industry, as I mentioned, the dairy farms; BSE hit the dairy industry as well, with the cow cull business. Jim's brothers run a dairy operation, again, down in eastern Ontario—a big hit there. It was actually costing them money to ship young calves. They'd get a bill and really weren't getting much for it. There were people who went bankrupt, as we know.

In a case like that, it can encourage desperate measures. We hear stories—not in Canada—of identifying a disease and, like they say, they kind of dig a hole and "shovel and shut up" and try to hide it. We cannot have

that kind of behaviour either. We have government for a reason: to ensure that kind of behaviour doesn't happen.

It's the same with the principle of insurance: It encourages responsible behaviour as far as, say, vaccinating for BVD, bovine viral diarrhoea, something that hit cattle 20 years ago. Some people didn't vaccinate and had their herds wiped out. In the insurance program, you qualify and you make sure the due diligence is in place. So that's another value of these kinds of insurance programs. It's really incumbent on the applicant to do the right thing.

I recall Mr. Vanthof indicating he would vote in favour of this particular amendment with respect to some of these catastrophic diseases that may not be covered, say, by federal compensation. Again, it's one way to raise awareness, something we have to continue to think about in the future. Who knows what may yet arrive on our shores from elsewhere, or, say, through migratory birds? We want more discussion on that, to make sure there's no confusion. The government didn't vote for that amendment, by the way.

As we know—and this may have been mentioned so far with respect to any safety net initiative, like crop insurance. The words we think of are “stability, predictability, bankability.” It's very important: You cannot rob Peter to pay Paul. This was a concern on the part of the Christian farmers and the Grain Farmers of Ontario. They didn't want to see what is essentially a new program, a new draw on the treasury, plus a new draw on the pocket-book of the farmer. But, again, much of what we do here is, we're in the business of the allocation of scarce resources. We don't want to see a new program set up that would draw money away from an existing program like the crop insurance program.

Crop insurance—again, the success is something like 14,000 farmers signed up last year, with insurance coverage for five million acres across the province of Ontario. Again, a combination of perils that are covered: disease, fungal diseases, nematodes, insects of course, weather-related events—hail, flooding, wet weather; we had a very early snowfall last fall, as I recall, and last weekend's frost. It hit my area; it hit parts of eastern Ontario. Did you get frost up your way, off New Liskeard?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Snow.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** So you're dealing with insurance coverage across five million acres. That would include Rainy River and over on the Manitoba border. There's some good hay country up that way, and good livestock country as well.

We've got a program. We've got what I consider a time-tested model to follow. I always had good experiences when I bought crop insurance. My neighbour would sell it to me, and he knew what he was doing; I didn't have to do much, really. He knew my figures every year as I continued to build up my reputation, at that time with respect to both corn and soybeans, and winter wheat.

1620

So we've got a model. It works well for five million acres. It's a model that works well for 295 million acres

in the United States, and that really puts our Ontario agriculture into perspective. They have programs south of the border, safety net programs. Think of those great states like Iowa, with many, many feet of topsoil—in some areas, it's something like six feet of topsoil; we look at maybe six inches of topsoil—Illinois, Florida, North Carolina—not many people think of Florida as an agricultural state—and, of course, California. Agriculture is probably, I assume, the biggest industry in the state of California. There are programs there that cover 295 million acres. We're talking about expanding an existing program for crops on five million acres.

There's a downside, as well. A couple of years ago, the kind of safety net insurance programs in the United States cost the US farmer—and, I would assume, mostly the US government—\$14 billion. That can skew the marketplace, and we are part of that marketplace. When I sell corn or soybeans, I sell it on the Chicago price. The Chicago Board of Trade sets that price. There's a \$14-billion input into the marketplace on the US side of the border, and that has to affect us and our ability to compete in the province of Ontario.

One other point to consider: We know this present government is talking about a ban on the use of neonic insecticide on 80% of the acreage in Ontario. I raise this as a competitive issue as well. They grow corn in Illinois. They grow corn in Ohio and, obviously, Iowa. Those are the big plains states, the big cash crop states—same as soybeans. We import corn. We import soybeans. We export, as well. It moves back and forth across the border.

Corn that will be imported, and has been imported, from the United States is treated with the neonic insecticide. We're going to have to square that issue as well. We've got to deal with that. This government can ban neonics on 80% of the acreage, so we'll bring in corn from our competitors, who will be permitted to use neonics. I don't see how our program, if it goes through, is going to help bees in Iowa or Illinois, but my question is: How will it affect the Ontario cash crop farmer competing with a product that is able to use the most recent product with respect to the control of insects? It's more expensive to grow the product without neonics.

I assume that this program will probably be handed over to Agricorp. All of the ad hoc programs kind of get handed over to Agricorp. It's a bit of a scramble at times, and it's problematic. We've got to ensure that Agricorp has the resources to take on this new program.

Again, going back to 1996, the Mike Harris government established Agricorp. The principle is, there's an insurance fund. The value of the fund fluctuates from year to year, depending on claims, crop damage and premiums that come in from the farmers themselves.

United States crop insurance, as I understand it, by and large is administered through very large private insurance companies. There are about 11 very large insurance companies. They do the legwork. They understand the business; they're insurance companies.

Like any insurance product or anyone in the insurance business, you have to mitigate your own risk. You purchase reinsurance, for example. You need reinsurance.



It's a risk management tool. Reinsurance is essentially risk management for the insurance product, for the companies; or, in this case, it provides that kind of backdrop, back-office cushion for the farmer and for the government, the taxpayer themselves. We have to protect the taxpayer. We have to protect the province of Ontario as we protect our farmers from undue financial exposure.

The existing program is triggered when a producer's actual production falls below the guaranteed production. Again, we trust this expanded model will provide an adequate response with respect to any disasters that may occur in the livestock sector.

For farmers, business people, they have to make decisions. They have to make decisions on a good business case. That's what we have to provide beyond this legislation, through regulation and developing the further procedures and programs. It has to be transparent. Stability is so important—and the bank is important. Before the bank hands over money for so many commodities, they want to know if you've taken measures to mitigate any risk that you may have. Again, bankability is key.

Predictability: Farmers need to know when the money comes back in, if there is a draw on the program. They have to know how much would come back, given the unpredictability in farming as it is. And we cannot draw money away from other farm programs, something the grain farmers, the Christian farmers were concerned about.

Here we are, Speaker. We have enabling legislation that changes the title of the bill; I'll give it credit for that. And as the minister has admitted, Ontario is the only province without the legislative authority to offer production insurance for such a wide variety of other agricultural products. During the BSE time, there was a scramble, and help came through ad hoc money; it didn't come through farmers investing through their premiums. That gets to be a bit of a Wild West show when that happens. Sometimes, things don't work out as well as they could. The money came from the taxpayer. It had to be done in a hurry. It had to be done; if not, the whole industry would have collapsed. That was one concern. Again, federal government money came forward for that.

But the ad hoc approach is not the way to go, and our Minister of Agriculture has stressed that. But things happen. Plum pox virus, for example: People were not insuring much of their fruit crops. We have what I consider a well-thought-out, workable program with SDRM, self-directed risk management, with our fruit and vegetable industry.

It's so important. Even though all we're doing is changing the title of the bill, it's so important that we get this right and make sure farmers can forecast, if something does happen, how much they could receive in return for their investment in premium, and that they get it in an adequate amount of time that their bank would be happy with that—or other creditors. We do have to get this right and ensure that we can lift that load off the back of the farmer.

1630

Racehorses: I'm still unclear on the racehorse industry. There's private insurance certainly for a very high-priced racehorse. Is there room in this model, down the road, for our horse racing industry? They've gone through a very tough time, as we know, with the ending of the Slots at Racetracks Program.

I feel that we can get it right. The province of Ontario does remain an agricultural province, a food-producing province. Just down my way, I represent two counties, the sand plain in Norfolk and Haldimand and the hard blue clay in Haldimand county. We're blessed with a variety of soil types right across the province of Ontario. We have the microclimate and I think, most importantly, the know-how of generations of farming, of mechanical ability, the understanding and knowledge of agronomy, how to deal with machinery, how to deal with farm labour—something very important.

The productivity in North American agriculture really has been quite astounding, something that anyone running a government-offered program of any kind would be well advised to take a look at: the efficiency and effectiveness of those who are involved in farming.

I wanted to make mention of insurance for bee mortality. This is something where the government can play a larger role, in my view. There's certainly been lots of talk about bees for the last year and half. A lot of it is just that, talk, I suppose. We have government for a reason. The power lies in a majority government to take a look at something beyond honey insurance, to take a look at the bee insurance program—although beekeepers didn't come forward to testify. One would assume that they're worried about bee mortality, but nobody came forward to talk about mitigating their risk on bee mortality from the five or seven reasons that can set back hives.

To that end, we did put forward a motion during clause-by-clause. I won't get into reading the details of our motion—although this is kind of what we deal with day by day in our business here—but we wanted to pin down, in this case, partly for reasons of discussions, that “agricultural products” means “bees, hogs and any other product that is designated by regulation.” We fully support taking crop insurance beyond, and into livestock. We want it to be specific, given what has gone on in the last couple of winters with bee mortality, and to determine to what extent we now have an adequate program of insurance coverage for beekeepers.

The same with hogs; we made mention of hogs. Every year I attend my local regional hog producers' and pork producers' meeting. PED—I guess that would be two winters ago—obviously dominated discussion. We have to continue this discussion.

We know with Agricorp there's one program under production insurance that's titled “honey.” It's not titled “bees,” it's titled “honey.”

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** A little interjection across the way. We can see that in Hansard tomorrow if we want to.

I understand it's available for beekeepers who have a minimum of 50 beehives. Oftentimes we hear from bee-

keepers who have two hives, which is fine; that's great. Even the beehives on our farm—and I haven't counted them; I was working beside them during constituency week and there are certainly not 50 there. I don't consider him, really, a small beekeeper. So you have to have 50 hives to qualify for the program. We hear that there are problems—from people who have fewer hives than that. It's a program where you have to report what you're doing, you have to enrol, you have to sign up by the deadline—I just heard of an operation that did miss the deadline and then got in trouble later on this winter—you have to have adequate equipment.

This is a program that is registered under the Bees Act. It's not registered under the Crop Insurance Act. I hope the lawyers that worked on this have accommodated for this. I really didn't hear much about the Bees Act. I don't think this legislation amends the Bees Act. There are still some questions, but maybe this comes up at the regulation stage.

Further to some of the Agricorp documentation that's under the title "Production Insurance: Honey," again, we're expanding production insurance beyond crops to other products. It seems that honey is already covered but to what extent is it covered? Certainly in the west—in the Prairie provinces—Alberta, Manitoba have bee insurance programs; Saskatchewan has a pilot program. I've raised his in this Legislature. I've raised this in question period—that doesn't give the minister much time to respond. But again, under this Agricorp document there's a subtitle, "Losses due to uninsured perils such as improper use of pesticides." It doesn't talk about banning the pesticide, it talks about the improper use of pesticides. Spray drift is what comes to my mind. That was a big problem from what beekeepers were telling me. This was maybe seven years ago. We had some very serious problems down my way—this was before neonics were being used. With respect to spray drift, they were concerned that maybe it was with respect to sweet corn, and I know, talking to beekeepers, that many of them have moved their hives out of the sweet corn and potato areas over to the next county in my riding to a more suitable habitat.

That's why we've always had bees on our farms over the last 30 or 35 years, because of the particular habitat we have. We have gully land interspersed with cash crops, so we've planted a lot of trees and I've personally planted pussy willow and things like that to enhance the habitat. That's something that I would recommend to anybody who owns a house in town. Sure, you can mow every blade of grass you want, but you may want to put some other plants in for insects. There's not much foraging on Kentucky bluegrass for our honeybees.

Spray drift—I think that would be covered under the existing program; I'm not sure. If we don't use neonics, the systemic approach, that means going back to the highboy. The technology is there. That's aerial spraying. We can go back to using airplanes for that matter. Again, how adequate is our honeybee producers' coverage compared to those in the west?

During clause-by-clause again, my colleague Jim McDonnell commented on issues around bee population decline and recent hog issues with PED—really one of the big reasons why this legislation is brought up, and that's why they wanted to raise it in committee. These were two sectors that the public hears so much about.

We had public hearings on the bill both in Toronto and in Guelph. I know the Speaker attended one set of hearings in Guelph. There were three deputations in Toronto and there were two in Guelph. I thought there would have been more organizations come forward. I'm not saying they didn't show interest. I don't know whether it was a lack of adequate promotion. It wasn't necessarily rushed through; I'm not saying that. But, again, much of the priority of concern has been bees, hogs and, more recently, H5N2 with poultry. A couple of written submissions came in, a request around coverage for flax.

1640

I guess there is that expectation that what we produce now—this legislation may not come up again for another 19 years. I mean, that's the last time this came up. So it's important we make sure that we're doing this properly.

It was just last week that the White House task force on pollinators finally brought out their report, this Washington report. It underscores the diversity of factors that can impact pollinator health. It acknowledges that it's important to address all of these factors and the complex interaction between them.

As far as bee mortality, the task force identified a number of key stressors as part of a national strategy to promote the health of honeybees and other pollinators: (1) nutrition, focusing on adequate forage resources; (2) land policies and practices to increase forage and nesting habitats; (3) management of pests and disease; (4) pesticides; and (5) issues of rearing honeybees with respect to biology, genetics and breeding.

These recommendations out of Washington are apparently broadly consistent—I haven't gone through all of the reports—with the activities of Agriculture Canada and their Bee Health Roundtable that stands in marked contrast to what we're seeing in Ontario, with their focus on one issue, specifically the neonic group of insecticides.

Now, the White House report identified a target of reducing the over-wintering losses to 15% in 10 years, but it breaks it down in stages: 22% by the year 2020; 15% by the year 2025. It acknowledges these yearly fluctuations. This government has set what I consider an unrealistic target of 15% in a few years.

Again, on page 53 of this Washington report that just came out—I guess this would be the most recent addition to the debate—they acknowledge that "Pesticides play a critical role in agricultural production and the health of our society."

Another one of our amendments, Speaker: "'Agricultural products' means hogs and any other product that is designated by the regulation." Again, we wanted to focus on bees; we wanted to focus on hogs. I may not



have time to go through so much of what hog farmers have suffered with respect to this viral disease, PED—a very, very high mortality rate. We lost something like 30% of the herd.

Again, with enabling legislation, it didn't give the deputants that came forward much to talk about, in a sense. They came forward to testify. They didn't spend their time talking about what the title of the bill should be changed to, obviously.

But back to bee deaths and what I consider, from what I understand, some very good programs in Alberta and Manitoba. Saskatchewan's is a work in progress. Maybe they've developed it by now; I'm not sure.

The Manitoba program assists with the financial burden of uncontrollable losses: over-winter bee mortality. Again, I think of last February most recently; that was really one of the worst Februaries I've seen on our farm, I guess, since the 1970s. They have options of the insurability: high-dollar or low-dollar coverage. They're paid an indemnity—"indemnity" is an insurance term for compensation—if the over-winter losses exceed the coverage deductible and the premium cost for the program. Again, it's that same ratio: 40-24-36. Alberta has a program similar to Manitoba. I do hope that those who are working on this will take a look at these kinds of programs.

The hog industry: Again, that was a very serious threat. That was quite a scare. Both federal and provincial governments stepped up—credit for that. The federal government immediately allowed a vaccine to be used as well.

BSE is the other one that still remains in people's minds with respect to our cattlemen. The vast majority of live animal exports go to the United States. Of course, Mexico and Japan—we had quite a market in South Korea. Back when I was parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, I know that the government did an awful lot of work with Korean beef buyers. I attended some of those meetings at a quite well-known Korean restaurant down near Christie Pits; we would get together down there.

The Canadian Animal Health Coalition pegged the total economic impact of the trade bans that occurred because of BSE at something like \$2.5 billion, and after two years we lost something like \$7 billion across Canada. There was no mortality insurance—no production insurance—to cover that. It was all an ad hoc program. It was a very serious situation that hit the beef industry and the dairy industry.

Going beyond beef, we're talking about a program that would theoretically cover much more than that; many other agricultural commodities.

The Beef Farmers of Ontario did testify. They fully support Bill 40 and this amendment to the Crop Insurance Act. They obviously look forward to working collaboratively with the province of Ontario. We'll all get a chance to chat with them at the beef barbecue on Wednesday.

Sheep producers: There was representation at the witness table. I grew up with sheep. There are so many

sheep diseases. Parasitic diseases: sheep nasal fly, blowflies and various worms. You dip your sheep to try to kill them off. The Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency testified and gave us a bit of a history and an update on the economics of sheep production.

**1650**

I really regret that I'm running short on time, but one very important thing I do want to stress is coyote kill. Again, that's not specifically covered in this legislation. There were a few things I wanted to mention about that. As I recall, the third party supported the discussion about maybe getting away—in my view anyway—from this ad hoc approach to predator control for something like sheep. It's wolves, coyotes, the neighbour's German shepherd. We lost a number of sheep over the years for these reasons. The compensation seems to go municipality by municipality. I know that the Ministry of Natural Resources is involved. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food is involved. Maybe we could be doing sheep producers a favour to do some work on, again, a livestock insurance program, certainly to ensure that sheep producers are doing due diligence, that they have proper fences, like we never had when we raised sheep; I spent all my time on the neighbours' farms chasing sheep every night.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Baa-ad situation.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Yes, it was a bad situation. You sound like a ewe I remember from years ago.

Anyway, maybe we can provide a service there to revisit the existing program. Obviously, MNR and agriculture and the municipalities have looked at the amount of compensation, the circumstances around it—often times it's a local decision, which in many cases is a good decision—and better control. I'm a firm believer in the use of large guard dogs to protect sheep or donkeys; llamas are the other livestock out there as well. But I think there is a role for government because it does seem to be a problem. Through an insurance program, to qualify you have to have the best management practices, whether it's sheep or bees, and that makes for a better insurance program.

I think I would like to wrap up now. I know the member for Leeds–Grenville would like to make a few comments. If I've got any other important points, I'll try to squeeze them into my two-minute rebuttal.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure for me to stand and provide a few moments of comments on Bill 40, the Agriculture Insurance Act, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act. I want to say that it's a pleasure for me to share my time with our critic, Toby Barrett. I listened to Toby's speech. He's just got a wealth of knowledge.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would urge you to use ridings.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Sorry; the member for Haldimand–Norfolk. Thank you, Speaker, for reminding me. He's done a great job in our caucus, making sure that members in agricultural ridings get out and see all the different commodity groups.

I know I've had a chance, both prior to second reading debate and after, to talk to many, many constituents who are going to be affected by this legislation. They all concur that it's time we start offering producers insurance for a broad range of agricultural products. I know that, as at second reading, it's refreshing to speak, as I do today, to a bill that has all-party support. I look forward to the bill moving forward and, ultimately, being passed. I hope, just as House leader, prior to us adjourning for the summer session. I can't speak for the government House leader or the NDP House leader, but I know that my producers and my constituents would sure love to make sure that this bill was in the mix and had received final third reading debate prior to us leaving some time in June.

The one complaint, though, as I said at second reading, was the length of time that it's taken for this bill to be updated. It's been since 1996. I think that too many times I've seen this government not being the leader on so many things, and I think when it comes to agriculture we have to continue to put our best foot forward. We've got a great province and a great agricultural industry, and I think we can't just lag behind. We've got to move forward and help change and transform our agri-food business.

Because of the delay, many farmers have talked to me about why it has taken so long. This was a recommendation back in 2003 by the federal-provincial task force.

I'm glad that the member for Haldimand-Norfolk mentioned neonicotinoids. I think one of the things that many of the farmers felt why there is such an urgency on Bill 40 today is because of the fact that they're trying to make a few brownie points with farmers, the fact that they threw science out the window as a government when they announced the 80% reduction in use by 2017. I think most folks in the agriculture community realized that they're glad they're finally implementing this crop insurance, but again, it has taken 12 years. It has taken 12 years since that 2003 policy framework from the federal and provincial governments to move forward.

Having said that, I'm glad that we can finally go back to our ridings—I know many of my colleagues have agricultural ridings—and say that there is something positive for them. I know in Leeds-Grenville, especially with the closure of Kemptville College there, the agricultural community is looking for a very positive move by the government, so this will move forward.

This is a sector that sustains 760,000 jobs in Ontario. It is directly responsible for \$34 billion worth of economic activity annually. During my second reading comments, I raised three main concerns that were brought to my attention by my constituents in Leeds-Grenville. Since the bill is being reported back without really any amendments, it's important for me, in the few moments that I have left, to put them on the record again. Maybe in the future this legislation, when it's reopened—and I hope it's not another 19 years before it's reopened again—some of those comments can be put forward to the governing party.

I also want to say—and the minister is here. He has been here throughout the debate. I want to congratulate him for doing that. Maybe some of these suggestions that are being brought up by the member for Haldimand-Norfolk and myself could be dealt with through regulations.

One of the concerns that I've heard is the cost of the program. Since the cost is shared, farmers carry the burden of 40%, the province 36% and the federal government 24%. The creation of a pricier program worries farmers. It also raises concerns, I think, about how the government is going to fund it.

What farmers have told me in my riding is that they don't want any existing program that they rely on from the Ontario government to be cut back and suffer because of this new program. It's important that the government remembers, when creating this funding model, especially given the current fiscal climate in Ontario, to continue to make a commitment in the agriculture sector. That's something that I've heard time and time again.

But the monetary cost is not the only concern that farmers have. There's also the concern—and the member from Haldimand-Norfolk touched on it—of the issue of filling out paperwork. All of the red tape that farmers are confronted with takes away from their time-consuming, vital farming duties.

Again, I want to quote to you a study that our previous critic, the member for Oxford, did, where he found that farmers in the province spent an average of 154.2 hours every single year filling out government forms. We have to ensure that this crop insurance act doesn't burden them anymore. I think we can all agree, from all sides of the aisle, that their time and effort are most valuable when they're geared towards their on-farm operations and not dealing with red tape and paperwork.

The big question is also one of incentive for farmers to buy into this program. How can we ensure that farmers make use of this new program? Could there possibly be a premium holiday, for example? It may be something for the minister to consider.

I'd also like to highlight the amendments. I know that the member for Haldimand-Norfolk did, but there were a number of good amendments that my PC colleagues put forward in committee. As MPPs who represent rural ridings, we have a significant relationship with the agriculture community, and it's obviously the sector that was affected by the bill. They've got the greatest stakes, so to me it's surprising that we go through this process. We had a government that tabled a throne speech that talked about partnership over partisanship, yet we weren't able to have any of those amendments passed at committee. Committee is the time that I think we need to flesh out some of these issues, to be able to work in a collaborative method.

1700

One of the highlights that concerns me is the regulations. It's outlined through section 11.1 of the bill, entitled "Regulations by minister." It reads like this, Speaker:



"11.1 The minister may make regulations,

"(a) designating agricultural products for the purposes of this act;

"(b) defining any word or expression used in this act that has not already been expressly defined in the act."

Giving the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs the ability to ultimately create the new product insurance program comes with a responsibility to hear these recommendations in order to offer the best program possible.

Some of the amendments that we put in—the member for Haldimand–Norfolk talked about bees and hogs. There was a lot of debate at committee regarding including them in the regulations, again because of some of the honeybee deaths and because of some of the issues in the hog industry.

We've tried to be very pragmatic and progressive, to add some of these suggestions forward. Again, I just think the government needs to take a look at this. Obviously, section 11.1 gives the minister this opportunity, and I really think, given some of the issues that have taken place in the province, that he should do so.

Switching gears a bit, in my brief time left I wanted to talk about the inclusion of a subsection that provides coverage for loss from predators. It's a big issue in my riding. I know that we've reached out to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, also the Minister of Natural Resources. We have a predation task force in Leeds–Grenville that's worked very hard on a made-in-Leeds–Grenville solution. I know they've had a pilot project, and I hope that the Minister of Natural Resources allows them to continue the project.

But the one thing that I did bring up in second reading debate that I was disappointed with was the fact that I wanted the committee to travel at least one extra day. I really wanted them to come in my riding and go on the site at Kemptville College campus. As most of you know, last March the University of Guelph decided to announce the closure of the campus. I really had hoped that in the spirit of co-operation, the committee could have at least had one day where we could have come to that campus just so I could showcase it, Speaker, just so I could show members from all three parties what a wonderful campus it is and what wonderful opportunities are available.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Speaker, I'd like to thank the member from Haldimand–Norfolk and the member from Leeds–Grenville for their well-thought-out comments.

Agriculture certainly is the backbone of any province, of any country. I'm happy with the fact that the minister has taken an interest in this and he has moved in the right direction. I compliment the Minister of Agriculture for his efforts in this area because crops are very important. When you have a bad year, depending on the weather and with all the weather changes we've been experiencing in the last few years—crops are very susceptible to disease and drought. With this new crop insurance, it certainly is going to save a lot of young entrepreneurs and farmers

who want to get into the industry and are afraid to because they could lose their house, they could lose their equipment if things go bad for a couple of successive years; this insurance will protect them from any major losses.

I, too, am not happy that the agricultural college is closing in Kemptville. We have Guelph still, but Kemptville was good for eastern Ontario, and I think it would have been a lot easier on the pocketbooks of parents sending their young people to university or college in the area that is closer to home. I think that's a sad day when that college will close.

Frankly, I think the more we encourage our young people to get involved in land use and agriculture, it's going to be better for our grandkids and our kids down the road because let's face it, Speaker: no food, no live; no water, no live. The bottom line is, you need these things. We all need it. It doesn't matter what fancy inventions we come up with, God has provided us with these things, and we need the people who are going to work the land and take care of us.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I was in the House to listen to the comments from my colleagues from Haldimand–Norfolk and, indeed, Leeds–Grenville. On the onset, I want to say they were very, very gracious remarks, by and large. They did provide some very good suggestions as we move forward.

Just to give a little background, I've been on the job some 11 months. One of the first things that I asked when I got the great privilege of being the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs: "Tell me how many ad hoc programs we've had over the last 19 years." So I looked at that very carefully and said that we have to make changes to the Agriculture Insurance Act in Ontario to get rid of the ad hoc programs, because that's just not the way to treat Ontario's agricultural sector. They need something that is stable and bankable that they can take when they're sitting down, often in the spring of the year, to talk to their financial institutions in terms of determining the lines of credit that they need to operate their businesses in any given year. So I took that into consideration, and that's why we brought forward the changes. We want to get these changes in place—I did so, after extensive consultation with all the commodity groups in the province of Ontario—to put forward a program that's going to work on their behalf.

As I said, I really want to thank the two members for the comments they made, the honourable gentlemen from the official opposition—and I will hear, of course, a little later today, from the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane. This has been a very positive approach. I think we have a good piece of legislation as we move forward. I did take the comments seriously in terms of how we develop the regulations. I want to say to my friend from Haldimand–Norfolk that I was selling ginseng when I was recently in China, and the Chinese market recognized that ginseng grown here in Ontario is actually the very best in the world. So that's another great opportu-

ity to further Ontario agricultural exports, particularly the ginseng field.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank them for the very positive comments this afternoon.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to have an opportunity to speak briefly to Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996. I note that the bill would expand the act so that it would apply to all agricultural products that are designated by the minister by regulation.

I, first of all, would like to congratulate the members from Haldimand–Norfolk and Leeds–Grenville on their insightful comments. But in the limited time I have, I wanted to focus on honey, as last week in constituency week, in response to a constituent, I happened to tour the northern part of my riding and visit Board's Honey Farm in Restoule. I'm sure the Speaker is fully aware of that, because he goes up into that area on a regular basis. But it really relates to the matter that the member from Leeds–Grenville was bringing up, which is red tape. There is, I guess, a current Agricorp program that assists for loss of honey, and perhaps the minister can enlighten me a bit on it. In this case, at Board's, they toured their farm in January and didn't seem to have a problem. I guess there's a January 30 deadline for the program that you have to apply for. They didn't see any problem when they inspected their hives, so they didn't apply. Then when they looked at the hives later on, they found they had an 87% loss, but they had missed the deadline to apply. Now, whether it's their fault or whether it's the way the program is set up, I think certainly a communication of the rules could be improved upon so that when operations like Board's really need some assistance when they've had big losses, they can find it. I'm hopeful that this bill will take that into account and add some flexibility to the programs.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I'm happy to have a couple of minutes on Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act. So is this a winner? There have been some thoughtful comments on this today. Everybody seems to be somewhat happy that there's a framework in place. But let's be clear: It has taken 12 years to actually get here. The member from Timiskaming–Cochrane—I remember when he actually did his first lead on this—said, "First and foremost, I'm pleased to see the bill come to fruition after its impetus was passed 11 years ago at the federal-provincial agricultural ministers' meeting in 2003." Let's be clear that the Liberals have been in power since 2003. Actually, when the Premier was elected as leader of the party more than two years ago, she was the agriculture minister for a year, and since then, it's taken two more years for this to actually get to third reading.

1710

It's just a framework. The proof will be in the pudding, as they say, at the end of the day, depending on

what the program looks like, how much money is put to it, what the regulations look like. I think that's when there may be time to celebrate or not celebrate.

As the member from Stoney Creek said, we've had a couple of bad winters. I know in Niagara there are big concerns about whether we'll have a cherry, peach or apricot crop this spring. I think this is certainly going to be important to farmers in Niagara and across this province going forward. I know it's going to be important to the grape growers as well in the Niagara region.

I hope that it doesn't take 12 years to actually get the plan and the program in place, so that the expanded act will actually assist farmers in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I believe that concludes our time for questions and comments. I return to the member for Haldimand–Norfolk for his reply.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The member for Leeds–Grenville and myself, we appreciate some of the feedback.

It has taken 12 years. That federal-provincial agricultural policy framework was in 2003. I think the OFA pointed this out in their testimony. The APF, as it was known back then, kind of redefined or rebranded crop insurance as production insurance—I refer to it as production insurance; we're debating a bill called agricultural insurance—that offered federal funding for premiums on eligible livestock insurance plans. As has been pointed out, Ontario has yet to take up those opportunities under the current framework. The way these programs go, they're going to be changed and redefined again in the federal election coming up. Who knows what may be announced in the coming months? And that's our role.

Many people out there, the commodity groups—it's almost like they assume, "Well, this is fine. You just transfer the coverage to livestock." It's fairly simple, like the transfer of ginseng. But the complexities of dealing with animals and livestock and diseases—there are going to be snafus.

The OFA pointed out work that needs to be done. They surveyed their members fairly recently, and they feel that business risk management is falling short for their needs. Production insurance scored very high, as I recall; AgriInvest scored very high; and the remaining program, the whole farm program, AgriStability, got very low marks. So we have to look at this and the complexity of the whole system of risk management.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to stand in this House and represent my NDP caucus colleagues, and today it's a special honour to be able to speak about my favourite subject, agriculture, and Bill 40, which is maybe not my favourite subject but is a very important subject to agriculture. I regret that I have but 45 minutes to speak on this subject today.

The travel of this bill through this House and through committee has been an interesting experience. If you recall, when this bill was first introduced, some of the comments from the government side were that they were



acting with lightning speed. They got a universal guffaw from this side, because it was approved in 2003 and the other provinces have all acted. I notice now that they're speaking about the evolution of the program, and that's a good sign, because it shows they are realizing that the agricultural community wants the real thing. When you say stuff like you're "moving with lightning speed," they know it's not right and they know it's a press release.

Most farmers back home want to be dealt with directly and want to be dealt with forthrightly. When you start off with stuff like "lightning speed"—I'm sure the minister realizes—it doesn't look good for the government. The fact that they're toning down the rhetoric a little bit—that's where I'll start—is a good sign.

Agriculture is a huge industry in this province. Judging by what figures you look at, it's number one or number two: \$34 billion; 760,000 jobs. It's a big deal, and it's always been a big deal. It's kind of odd, for someone who has been immersed in agriculture his whole life, that when some of the other manufacturing sectors had their problems, everyone seemed to discover agriculture. But agriculture was always there, and it continues to grow because people continue to need to be fed.

Also, there continues to be more uses for agricultural products, because agriculture is truly the bio-economy. Things that are used in the agriculture sector—that are created in agriculture—tend to be able to break down easier in the future. We hear about car manufacturing companies now making car parts out of soybean because soybean breaks down when the car is no longer a functioning thing; you can recycle that. It's things like this that people don't really think about but that we are coming to realize are much more important.

There were a couple of comments that the minister made today that I would like to comment on. Also, I would like to commend the minister: It's a great sign of respect to be in the House when your bill is being discussed. I commend that.

He stated that farmers in other sectors are at a disadvantage because this hasn't been implemented. I agree, and I commend him for recognizing that. He said he has only been minister for 11 months but he has recognized that, and I commend him for that.

One thing about agriculture is that we need programs that are stable and bankable. Thinking back, one of those programs is our risk management program. Agriculture is a complex industry, and the programs and dealings with the government are also very complex. While we're talking about Bill 40, which is basically a production insurance framework, risk management is more of an insurance program for price volatility.

The commodity organizations and previous ministers got together and created one of the most effective risk management programs in the country. It was a very good program. It still is a good program, but the program, when it was originally designed, wasn't capped. There are years when the program needs more than where it is capped at, and there are years when it needs less. If you

look at the budget this year, they're projecting that it's not going to reach the cap.

If you think about it, that program was only truly bankable and predictable when there was no cap. The fact is that when they're predicting it's not going to use the full cap, that means the program was designed very well. But in years when it's truly needed, farmers are artificially held back. So that program is not truly stable or bankable in bad years. Where that's really important and where it came up many times during the committee hearings—and I'm planning to go through the committee testimony—right now, the Crop Insurance Act covers, I believe, 90 crops, and it could be expanded. Under this framework, it will cover many more sectors, or it could, but that money has to come from somewhere. The provincial government is going to have to come to the table with some money. Some of that money could be coming from money that now goes to ad hoc programs. I think that's a good switch. If it's an effective program, where you no longer need ad hoc programs, that's a good switch. But that's not a guarantee.

What the people who now deal with agriculture programs, like risk management—one of the things that consistently came out is that they were worried and continue to be worried, as are we, where the money is going to come from; that it doesn't somehow come from another agriculture program—for instance, risk management, because if you take money from risk management to increase more production insurance for more sectors, that could be a net loss to the agricultural sector as a whole. That's not a gain. The devil is always in the details. It hasn't been made clear. We fully realize that there have to be negotiations with the other sectors, but we need a direction as to where that money is actually going to come from. Farmers need that, all the ag sectors need that, because otherwise you're negotiating for naught. We need that from the start. It's very important.

I'd like to go through some of the comments from the committee hearings. As you know, for the people at home, the way a bill goes through the House, the short form: first reading is basically a formality; second reading—we debated this bill in second reading. I think we had universal support of the principle behind this bill. This bill is enabling legislation that, after negotiation with commodity groups and others, is going to allow more agricultural products to be covered by production insurance. That's the role. It's enabling legislation. I don't think anyone is against the principle of the legislation. That's not a problem.

Again, a problem is where the funding is going to come from, but the biggest issue—I'm going to back up for a second. To put this into perspective, I'm going to talk about, since I have another 40 minutes—

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Take your time.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm going to take my time. I'm going to talk about what happened in Timiskaming this spring. For those people who don't know about where I come from—people who think there is no agriculture in northern Ontario are very wrong. There's agriculture

throughout northern Ontario, but the most concentrated part is over the hill in Timiskaming.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Famous Clay Belt.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It is.

It was a very odd year this year, because the first machines that came out this spring were the combines, to get the crops that were still salvageable from last year. The quality wasn't there anymore, but where it could be marketed, the combines went out. The seeding equipment went out and everything. It was a beautiful spring this year until frost.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** May 14.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Oh, and we've had several since.

The odd thing about the frost—and it's a really odd thing about agriculture—is that you'd think in northern Ontario the frost would have affected everywhere, and it didn't. Even corn and soybeans—some were affected and some weren't. That just shows how intricate and complicated and hard to understand agriculture and growing things is. It's a really complex structure. Some of the farmers who couldn't get their crop off last year—and, as the minister will recall, we talked to him about it. It was an exceptional problem in Timiskaming last year. It has never happened to that degree. So they went and got their crop—and some of those same guys now, and those who have production insurance, hopefully will be able to claim. Some of their crops have been wiped out again. It's early enough. Farmers are a breed. They have no bound of enthusiasm and optimism, and they will seed again. The reason that they have no bound of optimism is because occasionally—a lot of times, actually; more than occasionally—we have good crops.

But it shows how—if you look at how a field grows, you look at a region, there are micro-climates where I live, so I'm sure there are micro-climates across the province—blanket solutions don't work. That's what is so crucial with bills like this: that the regs and the tools be nimble enough to actually reflect the needs of the province.

One sector that would benefit from this is the beef sector. Right now, maybe they don't need it. Right now, things are doing well in the beef sector. But the beef sector was decimated by BSE. I know; I was in the dairy sector during that. I can remember that we sold a cow the week before BSE was announced. I can't remember exactly what the gross was, but I know that in my pocket was \$952. The same cow, two weeks later—not the same one, but the equivalent one—I think we had a cheque of about \$8.

When you drive through my riding—there used to be beef cows throughout my riding. The typical beef farmer had a job in the mill or a job in town, and he had 50 or 60 beef cows. That wasn't really enough to make a living, but for those of us who liked to farm, it was a great hobby. At the end of the year, you sold your calves and you bought a tractor or whatever. But for those years of BSE, you toiled after work, you spent hours and hours taking care of your cows and your fences, and then you had to pay a bill at the end of the year instead of making

any money. That's why the cows are gone. Now we have a shortage of cows. That's why the price is up.

For those of you who are hoping to enjoy some nice steaks on the barbecue this spring, I would advise you to buy them now, because the expensive beef is just starting to come into the system now. If you learn one thing today—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Get your steaks today.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Get your steak now. If you see a sale on hamburger—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Buy it.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Buy it now if you have a big freezer, because the expensive beef is coming.

You know what? The people who produce that beef need it. They need it because they have suffered and suffered and suffered. If something like BSE happens again—and it has happened, maybe not to the same extent, but PED in pork and avian flu in birds. It has happened since. So if this bill leads to programs that actually can help farmers with that—if something had existed during the BSE crisis, maybe we'd still have a lot of those farms in my riding and in ridings across the province.

We can't look back, because we can't fix what happened, but we can use that experience to try and make it so it doesn't happen again. That's one of the benefits of this if we actually get the regulations right. There's no problem with the bill, but the bill without the regulations is just not going to work.

We had, I believe, two days of committee hearings. One was in Toronto and one was in Guelph. One of the people who came to the hearings in Guelph was, I believe, Lorne Small from Christian Farmers. Lorne made the comment—he thanked the members of the committee because he was so used to coming to Toronto that it was refreshing, actually, that people wanted to talk about agricultural issues outside, that Queen's Park actually came to the country. I think that's something we should recognize. It's too bad that the budget hearings weren't held throughout the province.

1730

I don't want to turn this into a partisan debate because I think this one shouldn't be, but on agricultural issues, the true heart of agriculture doesn't happen in this chamber. To truly understand agriculture, we have to go outside of this chamber, and not just the people who work for the ministry and not just the minister but members, because I think members—the more we appreciate other sectors, the better regs we'll make, the better laws we'll make. We don't make the regs. The minister and cabinet make the regs. In this case, we make the enabling legislation.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention one area that's probably the hottest topic in agriculture right now, in cropping agriculture right now and in the beekeepers, and that's neonicotinoids—systemic pesticides. The government has decided to try to cut the use of neonics. We're not opposed to that. But where we really have to work on is to make sure that the regs actually work at the farm



level, because if they don't work at the farm level, we're just kidding ourselves and we're not protecting anybody or anything.

Every time I hear—and this has happened so many times—that we are going to have the strongest regulations in North America, I always want to ask, “But do they work?” I don't mean this as a slight. There are ways to make sure that regulations—I'll be clear. The people who use neonicotinoid insecticides, including myself, don't like the legislation, but we can live with the legislation, provided that the regulations actually work. The grain farmers in this province who use these pesticides—we are putting them at a competitive disadvantage. We need to recognize that.

If you'll remember my story about how the frost affected one place differently than the other place, it's the same with pesticides. Some places need them and some places might not need them, and it also depends on the weather. If you have a really wet year, you might need them more, but you won't know that ahead. Somehow we have to recognize that. If we can't find ways to alleviate that, then we're going to have to recognize that somehow there's going to have to be some kind of compensation program. Hopefully, we can work that into agriculture insurance, because if we don't, we are going to go back to, if a farmer has to protect his crop to make his mortgage payment—that's as simple as it is—he will be forced to perhaps use something that's more damaging than neonics.

I can remember, when I used to grow canola, that we used organophosphates. You mixed them in yourself, and that was wasn't good for anybody. Then, later on, they were mixed together, but you needed to wear a gas mask. Most of us didn't, but when you turned the corner, when you did the headlands and the wind was blowing the wrong way, you got sick sowing canola. Neonics were a huge improvement.

They're a good tool. Should we be very careful how we use them? We should be very careful with any pesticide. But again, it comes down to the regulations, because if the regs don't work, things will happen and you really won't know what's going on. That is the same with this bill: If you're going to come up with more sectors and insure more sectors, you've got to make sure that the regs actually work.

I believe the member from Haldimand—Norfolk brought up BVD. You can vaccinate for BVD in cattle. A big wave of BVD went through Ontario. I remember that. We vaccinated our herd. We vaccinate our herd every year, and we didn't have a problem, but some who didn't had a huge problem. Again, if you look at how the system works, should the person who vaccinates help pay the extra costs of the people who don't vaccinate? No.

Sometimes the Conservatives and us disagree on the amount of regulation, the amount of paperwork. But there has to be a detail so that if you're going to participate in a program where you insure cattle, and cattle are a bigger risk if you don't vaccinate, somehow you have to be able to prove that you vaccinated those cattle to be

able to participate in that program. There are times when you need paperwork.

It's just like regulation; it has to work on the ground. The trick is, the amount of paperwork or the amount of regulation—there has to be some kind of correlation with the level of risk. As a farmer, you get extremely frustrated when you fill out three different sets of paperwork that are basically saying the same thing and it doesn't really make anything any safer.

But there are programs that are definitely necessary. We have the safest food system in the world. I truly believe that, even though I don't like it when people say we have the best regulations. I feel totally safe eating Ontario food. Having been in the milk industry and the cash crop industry, I feel totally safe. Part of the reason is because we have a high level of regulation. What's frustrating, again, is when the level of regulation doesn't match the level of risk.

I'll give an example. In my opinion, and hopefully the opinion of my caucus, we overregulated small abattoirs to a point. What happened? Right now we have slaughter going on with no inspection.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** No way. Really?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes. There is a huge lack of abattoir capacity in this province. It's not that the government was trying to destroy mom-and-pop abattoirs, but when a mom-and-pop abattoir needs to have his-and-hers washrooms, stuff like that, they just throw up their hands in frustration, because there's not a whole lot of money in those businesses.

Did that make that type of food any safer? No. We would have been better off to have regulation that equalled the level of risk and tried to keep as many of those abattoirs in business as possible. That's just one example; there are other examples. It's a hard issue to explain, but it's very crucial. I'm really looking forward to working with as many people as I can on this to make sure that the regulation equals the level of risk.

It's the same with neonics. The government has made their decision. That decision is passed. The regs aren't passed.

An example—and I fully support grain farmers in this—is the EBR. If you're really serious about getting the input of farmers on a set of regulations that's going to impact them severely, and you put this on the Environmental Registry for comments, and you make them comment at the busiest time of the year, when the combines and the seed drills and everything are flying across the fields—really? Sure, the lobby groups are going to have time, and not just the environmental lobby groups but the farm lobby groups have time, too. But the people who actually need to make the regulations work—the farmers—who actually would have some of the best comments, saying, “You know what? Maybe this doesn't work. Maybe that doesn't work, but maybe we could do this”—they don't have time. The fact that that was done demonstrated that someone didn't really care what the farmers thought, because that was more of a slap in the face than anything else.

1740

I have farmed for a long time; I've lobbied for a long time. The reason I ended up here is because I did a lot of lobbying, but even I, when I was full-time farming, wouldn't step off the tractor to make a nice EBR thing about neonics in the busiest time of the year because if you miss a couple of hours, you miss that window. You'll have years to comment because you won't make your mortgage payment if you don't get your crop in on time.

We need to make sure that those regs actually reflect what farmers can provide, because they might be able to do a much better job than people in the ministry think they can do. If you look at neonics, the acute poisoning of neonics, when the dust—or the bees—farmers reacted very quickly with that. They recognized the problem and realized that it was because their equipment had changed. It didn't take long. They figured it out and the acute poisoning stopped very quickly. That wasn't a regulation; that was people working together—"Okay, we've got the air seeders. The air seeders make too much dust. We'll fix that." The old-fashioned planters, the plate planters, didn't make dust.

There are other ways, but if you make these regs when people are too busy trying to make a living, it's not going to work. That's with all legislation, but it's really glaring, maybe because some of us have been in the field and we see that just piling regs on top of regs sometimes doesn't make things any safer. That's something we really have to work on. We really have to work on this with this bill.

I'll go back to the cattle example. Do I believe farmers need to take responsibility for what they do to work with society and to be able to qualify for programs? Of course. If there is a beef program, should farmers be able to document that they've done all the things they can to protect their own herds? Definitely. But then the government has to say, "Okay, but what is the best way to implement that program?" Judging by the way that the neonic regs have been done so far, it's not a good bellwether.

There is still time to actually reach out. The minister, the ministry—the government may very well be doing that this time, but the fact that the EBR—that the comment period was held in the middle of seeding—for people who have never worked in agriculture, there are certain times a year when you focus on one thing. For those of us in the House, it would be like the writ drops and you've got an election of 30 days, and, "Oh, by the way, we're going to re-side the house." No, we're not going to re-side the house in an election campaign. Seeding on a farm is like that. You've got a window when you're going to seed, and then the government comes out, "Oh, by the way, we would like you to comment on the new neonic regs." It's not going to happen, and somebody knew it wasn't going to happen. That is an issue.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** That's a conspiracy—

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Whether it's an omission or conspiracy, it's a problem.

You know, we really, really need to work on that—it's not a partisan thing; it's not—because these regulations

affect the industry; they affect the health of people and of pollinators. We've got to make sure that they work. Is everybody going to like them? No. On these issues, we're not out to make the most friends. But we've got to make sure that they work, and that they just don't work for—I don't like the word "ban," because it wasn't a ban. It was a severe restriction, and in some cases, it could be a ban. But to really work—I'll give you an example with neonics: If I remember correctly how it's supposed to work is, you can do your own—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Analysis.

**Mr. John Vanthof:**—analysis. Thank you, Minister. Thank you very much.

Then, every third year or so, you need an independent analysis, but the independent analysis has to be done by someone who is not affiliated with any—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Lobby group.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** No—company that deals with neonics.

I farmed for a long time, and I used an ag adviser for almost my whole career. My dad didn't believe much in ag advisers, but I do. But—at least in my part of the country—there aren't very many independent ones, because you can't make a living being an independent ag adviser. These people are certified professionals, so why would they—they know the regs that are out there; they have no reason to fudge the numbers just because they work with the co-op or work with Pioneer, you know? If you're a professional, you're a professional—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** And your credibility is on the line.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes. That's an issue. And, again, it's very time-sensitive; when you do these analyses, there's only so many of these people around, you know? That's an issue.

The same with, if you show that you need neonics on one field one year, and then the next year, because you used neonics, you don't have a problem, well then, in year three you can't use them again. There's got to be some way to devise a way to make sure that where they're needed, that the regimen that we're implementing actually makes sense and that it provides accurate results and it isn't just put in place to appease people. That might be a harsh word, but regulation for the sake of regulation isn't protecting the environment. These have got to be tough regulations. I'm not discounting that, but they've got to work.

I know I'm spending a lot of time on this issue, but this issue never made it to the House—but issues like this will make it. The Agriculture Insurance Act made it to the House because it has to be changed to cover more commodities, but the regs aren't going to make it to the House. So we've got to make sure that the regs make sense. It came up again and again. It came up with the pork producers, it came up with the sheep producers, with the OFA, with the Christian farmers—they're all in favour of Bill 40. Like I said in my first hour on this, I don't think I could find a farmer who would be against Bill 40—maybe a couple; farmers are a contrary bunch. I



could probably find a farmer who was against Bill 40. But, again, they were all really concerned with where the finances were going to come from to pay for Bill 40. The minister said that there was no direct cost to the government in his opening remarks on third reading; no immediate cost to the province. That's because this legislation by itself doesn't do anything. That's why there's no immediate cost to the province. That's not a misrepresentation at all. The fact is that this legislation by itself doesn't do anything that's not being done already.

1750

I fully expect and hope that the government tries to work with the commodity organizations to cover more sectors like pork and beef. There are crops like flax. Flax is a big one in my area. There's no coverage.

When the province has to pay their—is it 26% that the province pays? I believe so. When the province has to cough up their 26%, where is it going to come from? If you're just going to take it from risk management, that could be a net loss. If you're going to close Ridgeway to pay for it, that's a net loss. If you're going to take a few programs out of the University of Guelph to pay for it, that's a net loss. That came through again and again and again. The devil is in the details. One of the biggest details in the government, especially a government that has some problems with how they spend money and where their priorities are—people are concerned.

One of the presenters in Guelph was the Grain Farmers of Ontario. The Grain Farmers of Ontario were concerned because they're on the flipside. They're already covered. They're covered by production insurance, and they're covered by risk management. If you want to pay the price, you're pretty well covered, except you're not covered if you have crop loss from the fact that you can't use neonics, not really; you can't insure yourself high enough to cover that, but anyway. Their concern again is, if you're going to increase the coverage to other sectors—they didn't want to hurt other sectors—where is the money going to come from? If it's going to come from their pot, it's a direct loss to them.

One thing that someone, I believe Amy Cronin from the pork board, brought up—she did a very good presentation. She brought up that because some sectors are covered and other sectors aren't, even within the same area, it creates unfair competition. Although people who drive by a country road might think, “Oh, the country is so idyllic. You've got a few dairy farmers over here, and you've got corn farmers over there. Over there is a beef farmer”—you think, “Oh, these people are all happy, and they get along.” They do. Country people work very well together. But it's incredibly competitive. They compete for land. They compete for custom workers. They compete for everything.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Water.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes, they compete. If a piece of land comes up for rent, depending on what crop prices are, there's a big competition. If it comes up for sale, there's a big competition. So when some farms are covered and other farms aren't, that creates inequality.

If a farmer chooses not to be covered, because crop insurance now—how many acres does it cover? Five million? There's a lot more acres in Ontario than five million. If you choose not to be covered, that's your own choice. But if you're in a sector that can't be covered, that's kind of unfair competition.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes, and she mentioned that. They have a crop side, and they have a very successful pork side. She mentioned that, and that one struck a chord with me, because it is—farming is a very competitive business, not only with other countries but within the rural roads of Oxford, of Elgin, of Timiskaming—Cochrane.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Huron—Bruce. It's competitive, and she brought that up.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Okay, Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Leeds—Grenville.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes, okay. I need a couple more minutes, guys. Can I name them all?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes, I mentioned Oxford. I mentioned Oxford.

I'm glad that my speech is split in two so I've got a few minutes to regroup.

It came out again and again: Where is the money going to come from, and how are the regulations going to be developed? We've got a good base to work from. The member from Haldimand—Norfolk mentioned the crop insurance, that what's covered now is a very good program. It is. I've participated in it my whole career. One of the reasons I've participated my whole career is, for most of my career, I was pretty heavily leveraged, and the only way you could get money to put a crop in was to make sure it was insured so the bank knew they were going to get their money out.

But again—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** You've got to look after those bankers.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I come back to the bankers a lot.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes, you guys do a good job of that.

But again, if you're in a sector that isn't covered, if you're in the pork sector, try going to the bank and saying, “I need to do this and this and this, and if things really hit the fan, then maybe the government will show up with an ad hoc program.” That won't work.

There is a need for this program, but there is a greater need for the government to identify where the money is going to come from. When I see in the budget, and I mentioned this earlier on in my speech, that one of the places the government identifies major savings is that they have to spend less money on agriculture programs, that doesn't tell me that they're planning on funding this. That tells me the opposite. When I read it, that tells me the opposite.

Something else I've learned in my 30 years in agriculture is that it's very dangerous to base your cash flow on how great agriculture is going to do in the next year. As we saw with the frost, it doesn't take much to turn the tables. Where you have to make sure it's solid is—if the production part of agriculture isn't solid and stable, those 760,000 jobs aren't going to be stable either.

I see the Speaker looking at the clock. Can I sit down and keep my 15 minutes? Perfect.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** This House stands in recess until 6:45 p.m.

*The House recessed from 1757 to 1845.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b> Forster, Cindy (NDP) Fraser, John (LIB) French, Jennifer K. (NDP) Gates, Wayne (NDP) Gélinas, France (NDP)	Oakville Welland Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud Oshawa Niagara Falls Nickel Belt	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>  Gretzky, Lisa (NDP) Hardeman, Ernie (PC) Harris, Michael (PC) Hatfield, Percy (NDP) Hillier, Randy (PC)	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest Oxford Kitchener–Conestoga Windsor–Tecumseh Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington Barrie	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB) Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC) Kiwala, Sophie (LIB) Kwinter, Monte (LIB) Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Dufferin–Caledon Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles York Centre / York-Centre Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b> <b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Brant Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC) MacLeod, Lisa (PC) Malhi, Harinder (LIB) Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills Nepean–Carleton Brampton–Springdale Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud Algoma–Manitoulin	
Mantha, Michael (NDP) Martins, Cristina (LIB) Martow, Gila (PC)	Davenport Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC) McGarry, Kathryn (LIB) McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry Cambridge Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton–Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











*Continued from back cover*

<b>Emile and Beth Therien</b>	
M. John Fraser.....	4471
<b>Bruce Grey Music Hall of Fame</b>	
Mr. Bill Walker.....	4472
<b>Ontario Disability Support Program</b>	
Miss Monique Taylor.....	4472
<b>Humber Valley Village Residents' Association</b>	
Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4472
<b>Anaphylactic shock</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	4473
<b>Gems of Etobicoke—Lakeshore</b>	
Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn.....	4473
<b>National Schizophrenia and Psychosis Awareness Day</b>	
Mr. Arthur Potts.....	4473

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

<b>Protecting the School Year Act, 2015, Bill 103, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 sur la protection de l'année scolaire, projet de loi 103, M. Flynn</b>	
First reading agreed to.....	4474

## MOTIONS

<b>Teachers' labour disputes</b>	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4474
<b>House sittings</b>	
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4474
Motion agreed to .....	4475

## STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY AND RESPONSES / DÉCLARATIONS MINISTÉRIELLES ET RÉPONSES

<b>Teachers' labour disputes</b>	
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4475
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4476
Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4477

## PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

<b>Hydro rates</b>	
Mr. Bill Walker.....	4477
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4478
<b>Water fluoridation</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney.....	4478
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4478

## Ontario Disability Support Program

Miss Monique Taylor.....	4478
--------------------------	------

## French-language education

Mr. Lou Rinaldi.....	4479
----------------------	------

## Wind turbines

Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4479
------------------------	------

## Privatization of public assets

Mme France Gélinas .....	4479
--------------------------	------

## Legal aid

Ms. Harinder Malhi.....	4480
-------------------------	------

## Ontario Retirement Pension Plan

Mr. Bill Walker.....	4480
----------------------	------

## Privatization of public assets

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4480
-------------------------------	------

## Credit unions

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4480
-----------------------------	------

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015, Bill 57, Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 sur les régimes de pension agrés collectifs, projet de loi 57, M. Sousa

Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4481
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4482
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4485
Mr. Bill Walker.....	4488
Mme France Gélinas .....	4490
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4491
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4492
Third reading vote deferred.....	4492

### Agriculture Insurance Act (Amending the Crop Insurance Act, 1996), 2015, Bill 40, Mr. Leal / Loi de 2015 sur l'assurance agricole (modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte), projet de loi 40, M. Leal

Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4493
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4494
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4495
Mr. Percy Hatfield.....	4496
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry.....	4496
Mr. Bill Walker.....	4496
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4497
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4497
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4502
Mr. Paul Miller.....	4504
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4504
Mr. Norm Miller.....	4505
Ms. Cindy Forster.....	4505
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4505
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4505
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4511



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 25 May 2015 / Lundi 25 mai 2015

### **Ismaili flag**

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4459
------------------------	------

### **Wearing of ribbons**

Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4459
--------------------------	------

### **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4459
Miss Monique Taylor .....	4459
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4459
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4459
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4459
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4459
Ms. Soo Wong .....	4459
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4459
Hon. Ted McMeekin .....	4459
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4459
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4460
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4460
Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4460

### **Special report, Ombudsman**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4460
-------------------------------------	------

### **Report, Integrity Commissioner**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac) .....	4460
-------------------------------------	------

### **ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES**

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4460
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4460
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4460

#### **Hydro One**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4461
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4461
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4461

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4462
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4462

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4463
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4463
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4464

#### **Ring of Fire**

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4464
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4464

### **Hydro One**

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4465
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4465

### **GO Transit**

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4465
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4465

### **TVO documentary**

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4466
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4466

### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4466
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4467

### **Home care**

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4467
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4467

### **Smoking cessation**

Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4468
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4468

### **Labour dispute**

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4468
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4468

### **Employment standards**

Ms. Harinder Malhi .....	4469
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4469

### **Ontario Energy Board**

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	4470
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4470

### **Job creation**

Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4470
Hon. Brad Duguid .....	4470

### **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4470
Mr. John Fraser .....	4471
Miss Monique Taylor .....	4471

### **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS**

#### **Service clubs**

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4471
----------------------	------

#### **Essex Memorial Honour Wall**

Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4471
--------------------------	------

*Continued on inside back cover*

ALON  
X1  
-023



No. 86B

N° 86B

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 25 May 2015

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 25 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 25 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 25 mai 2015

*The House recessed from 1757 to 1845.*

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding the speedy passage of Bill 103.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The minister is seeking unanimous consent for the expedience of Bill 103. Is it the pleasure of the House that the—I heard a no.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 13, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I believe the last time we debated this, the third party had the floor. The member from Nickel Belt.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** For those who are interested, you're going to be stuck listening to me for the next 60 minutes. I hope you had a good supper, because what I'm about to tell you actually may help you make healthy choices.

What I will be talking about in the next 60 minutes is Bill 45, which was introduced by the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. Basically, Bill 45 has three parts to it. The first part has to do with menu labelling, so that when you go into a restaurant or fast food, you will have nutritional information; the second part has to do with flavoured tobacco; and the third part has to do with e-cigarettes.

I will start with the first part of the bill, which deals with menu labelling. The research on menu labelling is now very robust, and the science is there to tell us that there are so many diseases that are directly linked to what we eat. We all know that our children in our generation are facing an obesity epidemic directly linked to what we eat and the lack of exercise, but we also know that if you

give people information, they use it and they make healthier choices.

What menu labelling is all about—it's not about taking choices away from people. People will have the exact same choices as they had before. But we will give them more information, and that information can be used so that they make healthier choices for themselves and for their children.

To start out, the bill talks about calorie labelling so that when you go into—name it—a Pizza Hut, a Swiss Chalet, a McDonald's, a submarine sandwich place—any restaurant that has more than 20 premises here in this province, then you will see the name of the item that you're about to order, the price of it and the number of calories that this item has.

### 1850

This is something that has been mandatory in New York City for close to seven years now. Actually, when I first introduced that bill—that was about seven years ago—the idea had come from the early research that was coming out of New York at the time. They were one of the early adopters of this menu labelling. Basically, the early results were so telling. Don't get me wrong; all of those restaurants that we're talking about already have that data available to them. That data is available usually in a brochure that nobody can find. I've studied this file for a long time. When I go to a restaurant, I ask to see the brochure, and it's always the same reaction: They start looking under the cash someplace; then they ask, "Hey, do you know what happened to—", and finally they find the brochure, or sometimes it's on a poster on the way to the bathroom. Other restaurants have it on the back of a little piece of paper that they put in a tray, if they offer a tray. And most of them also have that information on their website. But, Speaker, except for me and a few nutritional geeks, who goes on a website to check out the number—

### *Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Oh, there you go. Sorry about this. Two of my colleagues have joined the nutritional geek club and look at the number of calories in what they're about to purchase. But very few people do that; very few. Most people—it's spur of the moment. You go to one of those restaurants, you see what you feel like eating, and you order it. But there is no way, just by looking at the name of the item, to guess how many calories are in that food. It is impossible. I could lay out a number of examples for you—well, the examples are meant to trick people—but even without trying to trick you, it is impossible to say which one has more calories than



others. Things that look so healthy, like a carrot muffin—it's a muffin; it has carrots in it; it must be healthy—it actually has more calories than a Boston cream doughnut, which is already really high up there in the number of calories.

It's really hard for people to guess this thing, and although the information is available, it's not available at the point of purchase. So what this bill will do is it will change that. It's not a big change. It's a small change. You will still see the name of the item the way it used to be before; the price will stay the same, or change whenever they want to change it; but you will see this added—the number of calories. Just because we change the place where that information is available to us, one person out of two will use it to make a healthier choice. And if they're buying food for their children, up to 8% of the people will use that information if they are purchasing food for their children.

This is the type of information that has been available to Ontarians and Canadians for decades when we go to the grocery store. When we go to the grocery store, you will see people—they're not part of the food geek group; they're just regular Canadians who, when they shop at the grocery store, they turn the can around or turn the package around and look at the number of calories and the other nutritional information that is contained within the package, and they make their purchase decision armed with that information. That doesn't mean that if you want to treat yourself to something that is high in sugar—it will still be there, but if you want to make healthier choices, that information will be available to you right there on the menu board. This is what the first part of the bill will do.

Of course, it won't apply to every single restaurant in Ontario. You have to realize that, in order for that information to be accurate, the recipe has to be really set and the portion sizes have to be very standard. So you're dealing with a restaurant where the recipe is standard and where the portion size is very standard, because of course the calorie content will vary, depending on if your portion is bigger or smaller and depending on what kind of ingredients you put into that food. But this bill will apply to restaurants that have more than 20 premises in our province, and all of them already have this.

If you go to a little mom-and-pop restaurant that happens to be in your neighbourhood—your favourite one—their recipes are not standard enough. They often buy or purchase food, whatever is in season, whatever is available locally for them, and they cook with different ingredients, depending on what is available to them. Those restaurants will not display the calories in their food, simply because to do the counting of calories and portion size, you have to have standard ingredients, standard recipes and standard portion size. So this is all good.

The part where the bill falls flat is the opportunity lost. A bill is not an incremental type of exercise. Really, once you go to first, second and third reading of a bill, what is written in that bill is what gets done. In order to change it, you have to start over with first reading, second reading, public consultation, third reading and royal assent.

We in Ontario are missing a huge opportunity, and that opportunity is to also put sodium levels in this.

I will read from the centre for excellence in—I never get the title properly—the Center for Science in the Public Interest:

“Mandating calorie labelling on restaurant menus is a step in the right direction, but it is a costly mistake to ignore sodium.” The text of the legislation published so far doesn't include sodium, but it goes on to say, “The evidence and community support for sodium on menus is here and now; what is needed is the political will.” This is us. “The only voices opposed to mandating sodium ... on restaurant menus are lobbyists for companies selling salty meals, presumably worried that effectively informed customers will buy less food or none at all, unless restaurants do less pre-salting. Posting sodium on menus would incentivize companies to use salt more sparingly and help customers to make healthier choices.”

He goes on to say, “More than 40 groups and experts endorsed a joint statement calling for both sodium and calorie levels on menus. In a study of menu offerings in nearly 30 Canadian chains”—all of them having restaurants here in Ontario—“CSPI found that sodium levels in the same menu category within the same restaurants typically varied five-fold and calories varied twofold. Studies show that people, even dietitians, underestimate sodium levels in foods to an even greater extent than calories.” It goes on to say what a teaspoon or tablespoon of salt could do.

We had this wonderful opportunity to not only give people information about the number of calories that they are about to consume, but also to give them information about the amount of sodium that they're about to be consuming. We all know that sodium has a direct link to many quite severe chronic illnesses. If you look at coronary diseases, it often starts with high blood pressure. The first thing that your primary care provider will tell you if you have high blood pressure is to look at how much salt, how much sodium, you have in your diet. The salt that we add from the salt shaker certainly counts, but so much prepared food has amounts of sodium that are right off the charts.

#### 1900

The Canadian food guide will tell you that we should consume about 1,500 milligrams of sodium. Just for a laugh—but it's not really funny—I will give you the amount of sodium that is in some typical restaurant food. Remember, you're not supposed to eat more than about 1,500 milligrams of sodium through your entire day, through everything that you eat in a day—

#### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I know it's after hours for school, but if we could cut it back a little bit—I cannot hear a word she's saying. If you want to have group discussions, I'd appreciate it if you'd go outside. Thanks.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Thank you, Speaker.

I was talking about how in general, people should not eat more than about 1,500 milligrams of sodium, of salt,

in an entire day. So that's breakfast, lunch, supper and every snack you have in between: 1,500.

Well, listen to this: East Side Mario's—lots of us eat there—Hell's Kitchen Chicken: 3,220 milligrams. That's in one dish. If you go to Casey's—I like them—the pad Thai: 2,810 milligrams. There's more salt in that one recipe than you should eat in a day. If you go to the Pickle Barrel: This one is the vegetable chow mein—vegetables; no meat: 6,460 milligrams of salt, and this is a vegetable chow mein. The number of calories—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm going to have a drink of water just listening to that.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm making my colleagues thirsty, talking about so much salt.

If we look at Wendy's, for their Baja Salad—it's a salad; nothing special to it—1,620 milligrams. There's more salt in that salad than you should consume in your entire day.

We go to Montana's. Their fish and chips: 1,850 milligrams. Again, with most restaurant meals—and this is one serving; you haven't had breakfast, lunch or snacks or anything—one serving is more than what you should consume in a day.

We'll go to Country Style. Their breakfast bagel: 1,410. So at breakfast, you will already be close to your maximum sodium for the rest of the day. I suppose you could drink water for the rest of the day, but you may get pretty hungry.

A&W Papa Burger: 1,550 milligrams. We go to Dairy Queen. Their burger is no better: 1,750 milligrams. If we look at Arby's—I tried to vary it up—the French Dip: 2,910 milligrams, almost double what you should consume in an entire day you have in one sandwich, and you haven't even had fries with that yet; you're just at the sandwich.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** They have curly fries.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** You probably want the curly fries with it, but I will spare you how much salt there is in those.

Jack Astor's: The chicken fajita—is everybody sitting down? Because this is the winner. Does anybody want to guess how much salt is in the chicken fajita at Jack Astor's?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Thirty-four hundred.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It's 7,577 milligrams of salt.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Say that again?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It's 7,577 milligrams of salt in a Jack Astor's chicken fajita. This is a lot of salt.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Pass the pepper.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** “Pass the pepper,” says my colleague. Exactly. This is enough salt for an entire week, and you're having it in one meal, in a fajita.

We go to Boston Pizza. Boston Pizza's Buffalo Chicken Sandwich: 3,960. If you go to Kelsey's, their Pulled Pork Sandwich is 3,920, almost two and a half times what you should have in an entire day. The list goes on and on and on—all this to tell you that you would have to search really hard to find restaurant offerings that are not high in sodium right now.

Do you know what menu labelling did, where it made people change their orders in the states that have put that kind of legislation forward, many years before us? It also changed the preparations that the restaurants did. There is a sub shop that offers a tuna sub. That used to be one of my favourites, Speaker: Tuna Melt, it was called. There were 1,900 calories in one of those; basically, everything that I can eat in a day in one sub. Unfortunately, after you eat it, you would still be hungry for supper; therefore, you would go way beyond. What happened is that a lot of people did the same thing I did. Once they knew how many calories there were, they never ordered it again. So what did the restaurant chain do? They actually changed their preparation. They changed their recipe so that the number of calories in that sandwich was more in line with the 350 to 450 calories that you find in most other adult-sized sandwiches.

So you can see the impact it has. Not only does it empower the consumer to make healthier choices, but it also acts as a stimulus for the restaurant industry to have other types of offerings. I have no doubt in my mind, Speaker, that if we were to add—even if it was a flag for high sodium, even if it was some indication as to which foods are high sodium, so many people are watching the amount of sodium that they eat, it would have an impact. Once the restaurants are not selling those food items anymore, they change their recipes and put forward other offerings that are not so high in salt.

It is really easy to add a lot of salt to a dish. We don't really taste it that much. Usually afterward we tend to be very thirsty. This is what's happening with my colleague here. Afterward you tend to be really thirsty, but while you eat it, very, very seldom will you say, “Oh, wow, this is too salty. I can't eat this.” It blends in with the taste of the food and we just don't know. But whether you know that you're consuming sodium or not, the effects on your body are the same, the effects on your cardiovascular system, the effects on the chronic diseases that come with an unhealthy cardiovascular system, whether we talk about strokes or heart attack or high blood pressure. Some of those are pretty devastating diseases.

If you have seen someone have a stroke, a stroke on the left side of your brain leaves you paralyzed on your right side. Most people are right-handed, so not only are you at risk of losing the ability to use your right hand and right leg, you lose your ability to speak, because speech is located in the left side of your brain. Those are really life-changing disabilities once you can't walk anymore, once you can't use your right arm, once you can't speak anymore because of a stroke. Those can be profoundly hard disabilities to overcome.

And a lot of it is based on the food that you've eaten. But not necessarily the salt that you add at the table; it is everything that you bought that was prepackaged, that was full of salt. And as more and more people don't cook at home any more but eat in restaurants—and more and more families consume more and more meals from restaurants—we have no idea what we're consuming. So all we're asking is that for the information that is there—for people who go to the grocery store and cook their own



meals, we're asking for that information to be there. This is, as I said, a real opportunity lost.

I would like to put into the record a list of people and agencies that are happy that we are going to be introducing menu labelling in Ontario but that would have liked us to include sodium. The list is really long, but I will read into the record quite a few of them. We have Kim Raine, who is the co-director of the coalition for chronic disease prevention. We have Doris Mae Oulton, who is the managing director of the Alliance for the Prevention of Chronic Disease. We have Adrianna Tetley, who is the chief executive officer of the Association of Ontario Health Centres. We have Yoni Freedhoff, who is an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa and the medical director of the Bariatric Medical Institute. As you know, the Bariatric Medical Institute is where there is a new surgery that is now covered by OHIP to help people who are very obese lose weight.

1910

We have Susan Mills, who is the president of the Canadian Association for Enterostomal Therapy. We have Paulette Guitard, who is president of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists. We have Lisa Keenan-Lindsay, who is the president of the Canadian Association of Perinatal and Women's Health Nurses. We have Ian Culbert, who is the executive director of the Canadian Public Health Association.

We have Kevin Willis, who is the executive director of the Canadian Stroke Network. We have Anne Rochon, who is the executive director of the Canadian Women's Health Network. We have Dorothy Morris, who is the national director of health promotion and advocacy from the Canadian Council of Cardiovascular Nurses. We have Rick Blickstead, who is the president and CEO of the Canadian Diabetes Association; Lynne Vear, who is the president of the Canadian Dermatology Nurses Association.

We have Eldon Smith, who is emeritus professor and chair of the Libin Cardiovascular Institute and former chair of the steering committee on the Canadian Heart Health Strategy. We have Angela Dunklee-Clark, who is the president-elect for the Canadian Orthopaedic Nurse Association. Bill Jeffery, who has been here many, many times in this Legislature trying to stimulate us to do the right thing, is the national coordinator of the Center for Science in the Public Interest. We have Dr. Dhali Dhalwal, who is the president and chief executive officer of Cancer Care Manitoba.

We have Dr. Tom Warshawski, chair of the Childhood Obesity Foundation; Corinne Voyer, coalition sur la problématique du poids; Kathy Lawrence from the College of Family Physicians of Canada; Barbara Anello, active chair for the DisAbleD Women's Network Ontario; Janice Macdonald with the Dieticians of Canada. We have Dr. Norm Campbell, Heart and Stroke Foundation, and the chair in hypertension prevention and control.

We have Sam Hammond. He's been talked about a lot lately. Sam is the president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. We have Adrienne Montani, who

is the provincial coordinator of the Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition; David Hardy, president of the Fitness Industry Council of Canada. We have Anna Hunt-Blinkley. She's from British Columbia. We have Ross Feldman, physician, president, board of directors of Hypertension Canada.

We have Leslie Beck, in nutrition counselling. We have Michelle Devia, who is the president of the Licensed Practical Nurses Association; Joan Ttooulias, president of the Ontario Home Economics Association; Neil Collishaw, research director of Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada. We have Jake Cole, on the board of directors of Prevent Cancer Now; Marjorie MacDonald, president of the Public Health Association of British Columbia. We have Dr. Joel Kettner, who is president of Public Health Physicians of Canada.

We have Rhonda Seidman-Carlson, president of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. We have Christopher Jones, senior leader with Sports Matters Group in Ottawa, Ontario. And we have Andrew Pipe, who is a professor in the faculty of medicine, University of Ottawa, and chief of the division of prevention and rehabilitation, University of Ottawa Heart Institute.

I wanted to read their names into the record because those are people who know an awful lot about chronic diseases or nutrition-related diseases, and they all put their name to a letter asking this Legislative Assembly to add sodium to menu labelling. I think this is an important step that Ontario has to take now and not wait years down the road. We will be asking restaurants to make changes to their menus and menu boards. They will have to put up new menu boards. The minister was nice enough to offer a briefing, and we will give the restaurant industry many months to comply.

I would say that a lot of people would agree that it would make a huge difference in the health of Ontarians if we were to put the sodium there. And if we're going to ask the restaurants to change their menus and menu boards, let's get them to put not only the calories but also the amount of sodium. Other jurisdictions are doing this. And for a lot of those restaurants that work elsewhere, they also have some of their establishments in our province. So they already know how to do this. Don't ask them to change their menus and menu boards twice. Let's get it right the first time. Let's get the number of calories on the menu as well as the amount of sodium.

That was for the first part of the bill. And after talking about so much salt, I'm getting thirsty, so there is a glass of water coming for me.

The second part of the bill is also a part that is very interesting to me. It is to say no to flavoured tobacco, to end the flavour. This part of the bill basically has to do with regulations around tobacco and focuses on flavoured tobacco. In 2008, that was my very first private member's bill to go through. I was elected in 2007. The first private member's bill that I put forward was to ban flavoured cigarillos. It was new to the Legislature that we were allowed to co-sponsor a bill. Dave Levac, who was an MPP from the Liberal Party—he's now our Speaker—

co-sponsored the bill with me. I was very pleased that my very first private member's bill, to ban flavoured cigarillos, went through and actually became law. It is the law in Ontario that tobacco manufacturers—or anybody else, for that matter—are not allowed to sell flavoured tobacco.

But you know what, Speaker? The ink had not even dried on that bill before the tobacco industry had found a loophole. You see, when we wrote the bill we had to say what a cigarillo was. So what we did was we described it—at the time, we didn't want to catch flavoured cigars. We really wanted to focus on cigarillos. So we described what a cigarillo was by the number of grams of tobacco in the cigarillo. This is how we described what they were. Well, the ink was not even dry on that bill before the tobacco industry increased the number of grams of tobacco by 0.1 of a gram over the description we had and they continued with the same production, same distribution chains, same targeting of the kids—same everything—and kept on selling their product.

I have in my office boxes of the cigarillos that are banned, no longer allowed to be sold in Ontario, that I kept from before. And I also have bags of the new cigarillos that you can find now. I can tell you that in the First Nations close to where I live, as well as the corner store close to where I live, we are at 39 different flavours of cigarillos and flavoured tobacco. They never lost a beat. They continue to target youth. And they are very, very effective at it. We will soon find out that more than half of all youth smokers in Canada are using flavoured tobacco. The marketing of those products is made for kids. They are priced really cheap.

You can still buy a flavoured cigarillo in my riding for one dollar. They smell just like fruit candy. I handled a lot of them when I was preparing for that bill, and it doesn't take long before the entire room smells like candy. If you have a bunch of them in a bowl, it smells like a bowl of candy. They are really, really sweet. They take the harshness of tobacco out when you smoke them. Of course, it's tobacco in there, so they're just as addictive as anything else.

1920

It was clear that the tobacco industry is targeting their next generation of smokers. They want kids to experiment with those flavoured cigarillos, with flavoured tobacco, so that they become the next generation of smokers. We all know how difficult it is to quit smoking, and once you are addicted, it doesn't take long that the harshness doesn't bother you anymore. You don't want the candy-flavoured tobacco. You want the cigarettes and you will be wanting those cigarettes many, many times a day, because the addiction will call you back to it. The tobacco industry wins.

We saw some good steps forward in the Smoke-Free Ontario, steps that the government has taken and that this province has taken to help people quit smoking, or not pick up the habit. But in some parts of the province, and certainly the part where I'm from—although in general in Ontario the smoking rate is at about 18%, in some parts

of the province like Nickel Belt, we are closer to 28%. This is something that needs to change.

So the second part of Bill 45 is really to look at banning flavoured tobacco. Not only will it ban flavoured tobacco in smoke tobacco, it also will ban flavoured in smokeless tobacco.

Baseball season has started. It probably started earlier in Hamilton than it did in Nickel Belt. I can guarantee you that if you go on any baseball field where teenagers and adults play—not Little League, but adults and teenagers—look on the bench and you will see at least four, five, six different flavours of chew. That's chewing tobacco. Here again you get the nicotine fix, and it won't take long before you go from chewing those products to wanting to smoke, because the nicotine addiction will drive you to cigarettes.

Bill 45 would ban flavoured tobacco. It also makes other changes to regulate the use of tobacco. We tried, as much as we can, to keep it away from youth. So all of this looks pretty good. Except that here again the first part was pretty good, because we're bringing in calorie labelling, but we're really missing this opportunity to add sodium. In the second part of the bill we are doing something good, that is, to make sure that flavoured tobacco won't be available in Ontario anymore.

There is no description of what a cigarillo is or anything like this. No more flavoured—as simple as that. But there is a part of the bill that allows for exceptions; that is, we could exempt some flavours. And the flavour we know is being exempted is menthol. Menthol is the cigarette of choice for 28% of youth; 28% of Ontario youth who smoked in the last 30 days smoked menthol cigarettes. I don't know where this idea comes from where we would allow one flavour to continue. But I can tell you one thing, Speaker: The tobacco industry has resources, creativity, ingenuity like you cannot believe. If you give them that loophole to exempt menthol from flavoured tobacco bans, I guarantee you that they will find at least 36 loopholes to continue to target youth—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** That's right.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Absolutely—to target youth with flavoured tobacco.

There is no doubt that the first time you smoke a cigarette, you want to gag. It does not really taste great.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's not natural.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** No, it's not a natural thing to do. Most people will choke, and it kind of makes you feel a little bit queasy and nauseated. It's not really a good feeling at all. But add some menthol to that tobacco and the harshness goes away. Why do you figure 28% of kids smoke menthol tobacco? Because a lot of those are first-time smokers, and when they take that first drag it tastes pretty bad. So in order to get through the second drag, they will smoke menthol tobacco. Take that flavour away.

I know that some people will tell you it is sacred for the First Nations. The tobacco that is used by the First Nations for their sacred ceremonies is not the treated tobacco that you find in a menthol cigarette whatsoever.



They use untreated tobacco. If they want menthol, they will use actual mint leaves. It has nothing to do with respecting First Nations; it has everything to do with creating a loophole that the tobacco industry will jump through with both feet and is guaranteed to make us come back here through this process once again, thinking, "Wow, we should have thought about that." Well, we are thinking about it. Don't use this loophole that exists in Bill 45, in third reading of Bill 45. This is a mistake. Ban all the flavours—the sooner the better. There is no reason to keep this loophole in Bill 45.

The last part of the bill has to do with e-cigarettes. For those of you who are not familiar with them, they sometimes look like a cigarette. Sometimes they look like some kind of an electronic gadget. You drag on it just like you would on a cigarette and you put cartridges of flavour in it. And once you inhale through them, there is vapour that will come—it's really a vaporizer—there is vapour that will come and you will exhale the excess vapour that you breathe in.

When we had the public hearings for this bill, a lot of people came with anecdotal evidence that it has helped them quit smoking. The problem, Speaker, is that even if there are a hundred or a thousand pieces of anecdotal evidence, it is still just that: anecdotal. The products have not been out long enough to be able to have a robust body of scientific evidence to say that vaporizers or electronic cigarettes help you quit. But there is enough anecdotal evidence that we should make sure that if it ends up being a good way for people to stop smoking, then to be able to do this. But for now, electronic cigarettes will be regulated. I think things as simple as, don't sell those things to minors—I can't see who would argue with that. Why would we want our kids to start smoking electronic cigarettes?

It's always a balancing act. I think in the bill right now the regulations will help us regulate this industry that has so far been practically unregulated. A lot of people will tell you that this is a new product and it should be regulated by Health Canada. Health Canada has been asleep at the switch and has done nothing with this, so that the Ontario market right now is flooded with distributors of those electronic cigarettes and cartridges that come in dozens and dozens of different flavours, and vaporizers that work at different temperatures and all of this. In pretty well every town in our province you can buy those electronic cigarettes completely unregulated. Now you're starting to see them—often the one that looks very similar to a regular cigarette—more and more in places where we do not see tobacco any more. If you come into a restaurant in Sudbury right now, there is a good chance that at the table next to you they are smoking those electronic cigarettes. Some of them smell exactly like a regular cigarette. Plus, you have those vapours that go around.

1930

I can tell you that people like me, and I had been working in health promotion for a long time before I was in politics, who spent a lot of time, effort and energy trying to denormalize smoking so that people really under-

stand that smoking is not a part of life, smoking is not normal, and spent a lot of time, effort and energy getting there—to suddenly see those electronic cigarettes popping up just about everywhere and renormalizing it. I can fully remember going into restaurants where people beside me would smoke. Then you would go into a restaurant and one section of the restaurant was non-smoking and the other section of the restaurant was smoking—which was a big joke, because the entire place smelled like cigarette smoke anyway.

For many years now, close to a decade, people have not been allowed to smoke indoors, people have not been allowed to smoke in restaurants and bars and people have not been allowed to smoke in public places etc. But now you see those electronic cigarettes that look, feel and smell like regular cigarettes renormalizing the process? No, no, no, we don't want any of that. So let's make sure we regulate this.

But at the same time, the regulations would certainly allow for the continuing sale of those products and use as a smoking aid if people so choose. So, not taking it away from the market; it will still be available in Ontario. It will still be available to people who choose to use it as a way to quit smoking. If they want to use it in their homes, go right ahead, but don't sell it to kids and don't renormalize this activity with people.

As you know, Speaker, this bill contains two of my previous private member's bills. Certainly I'm very much looking forward to seeing this bill reach the finish line. Altogether, I have presented 11 private member's bills either dealing with calorie labelling, menu labelling, a ban on flavoured tobacco or a mix of both of them at the same time. For 11 private member's bills I have been pushing those ideas. I often say to the efforts of people pushing through a private member's bill—I call it that we bring more and more people into the tent, or we build a bigger and bigger parade. When I first started to talk about calorie labelling, I will always remember I was sitting in that seat right there. The gallery on the east side was packed with restaurant representatives and lobbyists, each and every one of them with their clean little shirts that had "Casey's," "Montana's," "Pizza Hut"—you know, like they wanted people to know who they worked for. They were all looking at me making my little speech about why we should have menu labelling. If looks could kill, I would not be here anymore, because they all looked at me with the wish that I could drop dead. But I lived through that. A vote was taken at the time, and it passed by three votes. We had a true—it doesn't happen very often in this House, but every now and again it does. We had a Liberal government at the time; it was in 2009. They could have defeated it right there, but some of their members voted for, some of their members voted against; our members all voted in favour. On the PC side, same thing: some voted for, some voted against, but it passed by three votes.

Fast forward to 2015: The restaurant industry is now on board. Some of them, actually, have made it a marketing strategy, to put the number of calories right on the

front of their products, because people want to know. If you look at some of the Coca-Cola products right now—and I'm sure I'm allowed to use a brand name; if I'm not, I just did—you will see that on the front of their cans, they put the number of calories right there in great big font because they know that consumers want to know that information. They have taken marketing decisions to really show people how many calories are in their products. You will also note that, at the same time, they introduced a whole family of new products that have zero calories. I am told that they taste exactly the same, but they have zero calories. They certainly show that in their marketing strategy.

So times have changed. The restaurant industry is ready for that change, and it is up to us to really take this opportunity to not only put calories forward, but also sodium.

*Applause.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** They surprise me every now and again.

Same thing with tobacco: It is time to ban flavoured tobacco in this province. Sooner will be best. Let's make sure that we don't open a loophole, by not including menthol, that the tobacco industry will utilize. I believe that would be a big mistake.

Le projet de loi 45 est vraiment composé de trois petits projets de loi qui ont été réunis dans le projet de loi 45. Le premier est vraiment pour mettre sur les menus le nombre de calories. Donc, lorsque vous irez dans une grande chaîne de restaurants—il doit y avoir au moins 20 restaurants en Ontario—vous allez voir l'item, le prix et également le nombre de calories.

Les recherches ont démontré que lorsqu'on met le nombre de calories directement sur le menu et que les gens le voient, lorsqu'ils font leurs décisions d'achat, les gens ont tendance à faire des décisions avec 25 % à 28 % de moins de calories dans chacun de leurs achats. On a également remarqué qu'ils ont tendance à dépenser un peu plus. Ils vont quand même aller manger dans ces restaurants-là aussi souvent, mais ils vont faire des choix sur le menu qui leur permettent de consommer entre 25 % et 28 % de moins de calories.

Au fil des jours et des semaines, parce que la population ontarienne mange de plus en plus souvent dans les restos, on se rend compte que consommer 25 % à 28 % de calories de moins a un gros impact. On parle de centaines de calories de moins par jour qui sont consommées, ce qui veut dire que l'épidémie d'obésité dont on parle, qui est reliée, bien entendu, à la nourriture qu'on consomme—cela aide à s'assurer qu'on consomme un peu moins. Donc, dans le projet de loi, on voit finalement, après sept ans d'efforts qu'on va mettre non seulement le nom de l'item mais le nombre de calories et le prix.

Ce que j'aimerais, c'est qu'on fasse non seulement mettre le nombre de calories, mais qu'on ajoute également la quantité de sodium. En ce moment en Ontario, il y a tellement de sodium qui est ajouté à la nourriture qu'on nous sert dans les restaurants. C'est incroyable.

**1940**

J'avais donné quelques exemples; je vais vous relire quelques-uns. Si on va chez East Side Mario's pour « Hell's Kitchen Chicken »—le poulet « hell's kitchen »; je ne sais pas trop comment on traduit ça—c'est 3 220 milligrammes de sodium. Les adultes, en général, ne devraient pas consommer plus de 1 500 milligrammes de sodium. Donc, ça vous donne une idée, monsieur le Président : c'est plus de la moitié pour un seul item au menu. Cela n'inclut pas ce qu'on a mangé pour le déjeuner, ce qu'on a mangé pour le dîner, ce qu'on est en train de manger pour le souper, ou si on a eu des collations entre ça. Vous pouvez imaginer comment vite le montant de sodium va vite augmenter.

Casey's, c'est la même chose. Un pad thaï chez Casey's, c'est 2 810 milligrammes, quasiment le double de ce que tu devrais consommer dans ta journée, dans un seul item chez Casey's. Je pourrais continuer : The Pickle Barrel, et là c'est un chow mein aux légumes. Un chow mein a quand même beaucoup de légumes, et puis c'est un chow mein aux légumes—on n'a même pas de viande là-dedans—6 460 milligrammes. C'est l'équivalent de quatre jours complets de sodium dans un seul chow mein. On n'a pas déjeuné encore, on n'a pas diné, on n'a pas eu de collations, on n'a pas eu de breuvages, on n'a eu rien de ça, et on vient de consommer 6 460 milligrammes de sel.

*Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'ai de mes collègues qui disent : « Pas de chow mein pour moi. » Mais c'est qu'on ne le sait pas. On ne le sait pas. Une salade chez Wendy's, la salade Baja, a 1 620 milligrammes, plus que ce que tu devrais consommer dans toute la journée, dans une salade qui a vraiment surtout des fruits et des légumes, et pourtant ils y ont rajouté 1 620 milligrammes de sel.

**M. John Vanthof:** Je vais rester avec le Baconator.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Non. Mon collègue fait de mauvais choix au restaurant.

Le « fish and chips » chez Montana's, c'est 1 850 milligrammes. Si on regarde un bagel de déjeuner chez Country Style : 1 410 milligrammes. Là on est au déjeuner et il nous reste encore le dîner, le souper, les collations, les boissons, puis tout ça, et on a déjà consommé le maximum qu'on devrait consommer pour la journée.

On a une opportunité en or en ce moment en Ontario. Lorsqu'on va demander aux restaurants de changer leur menu et d'y ajouter les calories, on a une occasion en or de leur demander de rajouter également le sodium, étant donné qu'on sait qu'il y a un lien direct entre le sodium qui est consommé dans la nourriture dans les restos et les maladies cardiovasculaires, telles que la haute pression, les ACV et les maladies cardiaques.

Je pourrais continuer. Un de mes préférés, c'est le fajita au poulet. Un fajita, vous connaissez ça. Cela a beaucoup de légumes et on enroule ça dans une espèce de crêpe : 7 577 milligrammes. Ça vaut la peine d'être répété : 7 577 milligrammes de sodium dans le fajita au



poulet chez Jack Astor's. Ça, c'est l'équivalent d'une semaine de sel dans un seul repas. Puis là, il y a beaucoup, beaucoup de sel. Je vous donne ça comme exemple, monsieur le Président, parce que je ne veux pas qu'on manque l'opportunité.

La deuxième partie du projet de loi, c'est le tabac aromatisé. Comme vous le savez, mon premier projet de loi lorsque je suis arrivée comme députée, c'était de vraiment bannir les cigarillos aromatisés, donc le tabac aromatisé que l'on vendait dans des cigarillos qui étaient vraiment destinés à la jeunesse. Ils sont dans des emballages qui sont pleins de couleurs. Ça ressemble un peu à un Fruit Roll-Up, ces affaires-là. Ça sent les bonbons, ça sent les fruits, mais c'était du tabac.

On a réussi à faire passer le premier projet de loi, mais l'encre n'était même pas sèche sur ce projet de loi que déjà l'industrie du tabac avait trouvé une échappatoire et a continué à vendre. Ils ont même augmenté le nombre de saveurs de tabac aromatisé qu'ils avaient sur le marché et ont continué de les vendre directement aux jeunes. C'est clair que si les jeunes commencent à consommer du tabac aromatisé, ça ne prend pas beaucoup de temps avant que la nicotine fasse son effet—la nicotine crée la dépendance—et les jeunes ne veulent plus vraiment le tabac aromatisé; ce qu'ils veulent c'est une cigarette. L'industrie du tabac a gagné un autre fumeur ou une autre fumeuse, et le cercle vicieux continue, où ces jeunes-là vont continuer à fumer, souvent toute leur vie. C'est tellement difficile, une fois que tu commences, d'arrêter de fumer.

Donc, un autre bon pas dans le projet de loi 45 est qu'on va bannir le tabac aromatisé, que ce soit le tabac que l'on fume ou le tabac que l'on chique. Que ce soit ce qu'on appelle les « chews », le tabac à chiquer—si c'est aromatisé, ça aussi, c'est partie; on n'en veut plus.

Le problème avec le projet de loi, c'est qu'il y a encore une clause qui permet d'exempter certains saveurs. On sait déjà que la ministre a l'intention d'exempter le menthol. À ce moment, 28 % des jeunes qui ont fumé pendant le dernier mois ont fumé des cigarettes menthol. C'est clair que il y a une ligne directe entre le tabac aromatisé menthol et la jeunesse. Il y a tellement de jeunes qui en fument. C'est une erreur d'avoir cette clause dans le projet de loi. J'ai essayé autant comme autant en deuxième lecture et en « clause-by-clause » de faire changer ça. Je n'en suis pas venue à bout, mais ce n'est pas le temps de descendre les bras. Il faudra s'assurer que lorsque l'on va bannir le tabac aromatisé en Ontario, le tabac menthol y est également inclus.

La dernière partie du projet de loi est la cigarette électronique. La cigarette électronique va continuer d'être disponible mais pas aux enfants, et on va limiter là où l'on aura le droit de l'utiliser.

Je vous remercie d'avoir été si patients avec moi.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments? The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I'd like to begin by welcoming Chris Yaccato of the Ontario Lung Association. We

often have gallery members, but I think it shows true dedication to the cause when somebody shows up at a late sitting. Thank you so much, Chris.

Speaker, I just wanted to congratulate the member from Nickel Belt for, as usual, presenting such a persuasive case and doing such a great job of advocating for Bill 45. I've heard her many times, and she always does a great job.

The thought did occur to me that I could have written her speech today. The reason is that I've heard her say these things over and over again. When she was telling the anecdote around cigarillos, in my head, I'm going, "Oh, now she's going to say, 'before the ink dried.'" The only reason I'm saying this is that when, at this point, the opposition can actually begin to predict the lines somebody is going to be using in a debate, I think we've debated this to death. I think that everything that had to be said has been said.

The member opposite did what she's being asked to do, so this is not about her. But I think the leadership on that side needs to recognize that we're not really adding any value by continuing to debate this bill. All the arguments have been made. They've been made very well, and they're all valid, but now we're really repeating ourselves. I think this time would be better used if we were debating something more timely, like trying to get our kids back to school. I think that would be real leadership, and we should just move on.

I think this bill is ready to be voted on. Let's vote on it. Let's make it law, so that we can start making it easier for Ontarians to truly make those healthy choices. My plea to this House would be: Let's stop talking over and over about the same things; let's start to act on it. That's my request.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank the member for Nickel Belt for her comments. I'm going to do something a little bit different: I'm going to talk about something that happened in the riding on break week, and then tie it back into Bill 45.

During National Nursing Week, I took the opportunity to go to the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit for Take Your MPP to Work Day, and participated in the RAO Best Practice Spotlight Organizations program. Our local health unit is now involved in it; it's the official start of a three-year journey for the health unit. I was pleased that the program was all about improving outcomes for patients, and that it takes into account the entire range of health-related issues.

I also want to try to tie it back to Bill 45, because for healthier choices, the guidelines of the best practice program include things like smoking cessation and treating childhood obesity, so I wanted to do a shout-out to my local health unit because I think it's commendable that they're involved in this program. What I like best about it is that it also allows them and their participating agencies to adopt guidelines that are specific to their patients. So it means that in Leeds–Grenville and Lanark they're going

to tailor-make it to the needs of our constituents. I think that's very, very important.

**1950**

I enjoyed the opportunity to take part in that process. I got to bring greetings not just from myself but also from my colleagues from Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington and also Carleton—Mississippi Mills. I got to speak to some front-line nurses. Again, I think it's very important when you're going to talk about health care, whether it is Bill 45 or any other health bill, that you actually get the opportunity to speak to the people on the front lines to see what's happening.

I did see a tie-in between this program and Bill 45, especially because of some of the smoking cessation, the childhood obesity—I think it's really important to have that grassroots touch, and I'm glad that I was able to bring my local program as part of listening to the wonderful hour that the member for Nickel Belt talked about. Thank you, Speaker, for giving me this chance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Kitchener—Waterloo.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It is such a pleasure, actually, to follow the member from Nickel Belt. Her history on this file is unquestionable. When I talk to people in the riding of Kitchener—Waterloo, which I represent, they comment on her ability to have brought forward legislation, private members' bills, on the tanning beds, on flavoured cigarillos and on the issue of smoking cessation. Seven years; the member from Nickel Belt has been fighting this battle for seven years.

Recently I had the pleasure of attending a breakfast with the Cancer Society of Ontario, and the associate member stood up and the member from the PC caucus stood up, and the member from Nickel Belt said, "We tried to change this legislation. We tried to ban the menthol portion of this legislation. Why leave a two-year window around menthol cigarettes when we know through research"—the Premier has said, "We're going to put evidence above partisanship. We're going to make sure that we do policy in this province right." They have the evidence, and yet you've left a two-year window around the menthol cigarettes. For us, that's irresponsible. If you really want to lead on this file, follow what we have put forth through seven years of private members' bills on cancer prevention. Do it right and actually follow through on it.

The Cancer Society of Ontario, they were shocked. There were members of this party who were sitting at the breakfast and they were like, "We didn't know that this two-year window was left open on menthol cigarettes."

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's true. You can't challenge it. It's the truth.

The member from Nickel Belt has raised this concern again and again, and I commend her courage in standing in the face of, quite honestly, short-sightedness on the part of this government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** Thank you, colleagues, and thank you, Speaker, for recognizing me in this lonely spot at the back of the room here. I, too, would like to commend the member from Nickel Belt for her reasoned remarks on the bill. I did have a sense of déjà vu, having heard them before in previous debates on the same bill, not that it in any way diminishes the importance of the great remarks she made.

I also want to comment on how admirable it is and how so much in awe I am of her proficiency in both official languages, because it allows her, of course, to spend a good portion of her discussion in one official language and then say the same thing in the second official language. I could hear about the sodium context—she spoke of all the different restaurants, first in English and then in French, but I appreciate it because sometimes we need to be hit over the head two or three times to get the message.

I'm reminded in this whole sodium debate of the great fable of the king and his three daughters. The king said to his daughters, "Who loves me the most?" One daughter said, "Dad, I love you like all the gold in the world." The second daughter said, "Dad, I love you like all the diamonds and jewelry and rubies and such in the world." And he said, "Oh, you're the greatest daughters." And the third daughter said, "Father, I love you like salt." The father was so horrified that his daughter would diminish the affection that she had by saying, "I love you like salt" that he banished her from the kingdom, and he banished all salt from the kingdom.

In the fable, all the people of the community rose up in arms because their food didn't taste very good anymore. The whole country was in an uproar because of salt, and he realized what a truism it was that his third daughter said that she loved him like salt that he brought her back and made her the favourite one.

So we recognize that salt is, of course, what makes our food taste very good, but it doesn't diminish the fact, as the member from Nickel Belt points out, that too much salt is not a good thing. We appreciate very much her reminding us of that in both official languages.

I ask again, as the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs would ask, why are we debating this bill?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Nickel Belt has two minutes.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm going to have a little quiz with you. You have to tell me the difference: We're at Montana's. You can order the beef ribs or the sirloin steak. Take a guess at the calories between the two.

*Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I thought you were going to say something. The ribs have 1,500 calories, the steak has 420. Could you have ever—the difference between the two is huge.

If we go to Tim Hortons now, you have a choice between the breakfast sandwich or the English muffin egg and cheese sandwich. Which one do you figure?

*Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** If you're interested, the Tim Hortons breakfast sandwich has 530 calories; the English



muffin egg and cheese sandwich has 280 calories. One is double the other one, but by seeing them on the menu, it's impossible to guess.

If we go to Pizza Hut, on the children's menu, you have a choice between the Boneless Bites—those are little chicken nuggets—or we can go with the Veggie Lover's pizza. This time, we're going to do sodium. Do you figure the chicken nuggets or the pizza have the most sodium?

*Interjections.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** So the people who said the chicken nuggets, 1,600 milligrams of sodium, versus the pizza, which had 430—the difference is fourfold, but it is almost impossible to guess.

If you go to McDonald's, the Angus bacon and cheese sandwich versus the Double Quarter Pounder—same thing. The Angus bacon and cheese sandwich has almost 2,000 calories, the other one has 800. It is impossible to guess. That's why we need to put sodium on the menu.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Now the member has made everybody hungry.

Further debate?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Speaker, I'll be sharing my time with the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound this evening.

I listened with intent to the associate minister's comments during this debate on Bill 45, and I find her comments atrocious. I find her comments despicable. She said that there is no need for further debate, no need for further discussion, and that we ought to be doing something more productive and valuable with our time. That's what the Associate Minister of Health, who is the author of this bill, said.

Speaker, it's unfortunate that the Associate Minister of Health was not in the committee, hearing deputations and testimony from so many people on Bill 45—so many people opposed to Bill 45. This debate is not over. I believe it has only just begun.

I want to dispel some myths that have been presented as fact by the Associate Minister of Health. The first one is, this is not a cigarette. This is not tobacco. But under Bill 45, this electronic vaporizer will be deemed to be a tobacco product—

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Prop. Prop. Prop.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Prop.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** It has nothing political—this is a fact.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** No, but that's a prop. You can't use it.

2000

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** That is an electronic vaporizer. It is not a cigarette. It has a battery in it. It has a coil in it. It's an electronic device. There is no tobacco in it. However, Bill 45, schedule 3, says that item is, and will be treated exactly as if it were a cigarette.

The Minister of Health says they're not banning vaporizers. They're not banning electronic cigarettes, but every restriction that applies to cigarettes will apply to that vaporizer. Every restriction and every new restriction

that ever comes forward under the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act will apply to that electronic cigarette. They will be banned from use in indoor facilities. They will be banned from use in all workplaces, indoor or out. If you're driving a motor vehicle for work, it will be banned, subject to fines and penalties. If you have a store that sells these, it will be subject to the same restrictions as tobacco—hidden behind a case that nobody can see. Clerks and vendors will not be allowed to display them, will not be allowed to talk about them and will not be able to demonstrate them.

A vaporizer is an electronic device. It is not a cigarette. You need—

**Interjection:** What does it look like?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Does that look like a cigarette? Does it? Well, if that looks like a cigarette to you, you're in a different world than me.

I'm going to say to you, Speaker, that the bans—it will be a ban. You will not be allowed to demonstrate them. You will not be allowed to show them.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** Hear, hear. Good legislation.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs says that that's good legislation.

I'm going to tell you, Speaker, I asked a question in the House this morning. Before I got to that question—there are three people in my Perth constituency office who are all smokers. They have all quit and they're all using that—every one of them. They've all tried to quit on many occasions. They have used patches. They have used inhalers. They have used gums. They have used everything—hypnosis, acupuncture. They could not quit. But now those three people have quit smoking because of that prop.

Dr. John Britton from Action on Smoking and Health in the UK, a respected physician from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in the UK, testified to our committee that over three quarters of a million Britons have quit smoking in the last four years because of that. More people have quit smoking in the UK because of that than all other nicotine replacement therapies—all—combined, including patches, inhalers and Champix, in the last 10 years. More people—three quarters of a million people—have quit smoking. This is the greatest technology and advantage to reduce harm from tobacco that this country has seen, and this province, this government, is outlawing it. Outlawing it.

You are going to prevent people from having the advantage of quitting smoking. Why? Why is this government so hell-bent to prevent people from quitting smoking? I don't know. But I know that the two stakeholders, the two interest groups that are promoting the ban on those vaporizers, have a vested interest. One of them is Big Tobacco, because Big Tobacco sees that as a threat. There's no greater harm-reduction and smoking-cessation device than that. Big Tobacco doesn't like them. Neither does the Liberal government. Big Pharma doesn't like those. Big Pharma hates them because, compared to nicotine patches—

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** What do doctors say?

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** What do doctors say? Talk to Dr. Gopal Bhatnagar, who was at the committee. He's the head cardiac surgeon in this province. He is a professor at the University of Toronto—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Continue.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Dr. Bhatnagar testified that that is the best harm-reduction and smoking-cessation device that he has ever seen as the head cardiac surgeon and professor emeritus at the University of Toronto.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** You can look smug, you can laugh, you can joke, but what we're talking about are people's lives. What we're talking about is helping people kick the habit. There's no doubt why I have one of those. Everybody in this Legislature knows that I'm a smoker, or probably knows I'm a smoker. I'm smoking a whole lot less these days, a whole lot less. One day I hope soon that I'll stop smoking, and I'm sure when I stop smoking, it will be because of that.

Let me say to every member in this Legislature: The laws that you have proposed will make it that when I want to satisfy my nicotine addiction, I will have to go outside and join smokers. I cannot use that anywhere else. I'll have to go outside and congregate with smokers because that is now unlawful. Is that what we want to do? Is it?

I've heard from the Associate Minister of Health that this bill is targeted to youth. That's not true. It's not true. If it was targeted to youth, we would put in restrictions to prevent people from entering vape shops who are under 19. We would not prevent people over 19 from seeing and having vaporizers demonstrated to them. We would not prevent the family man who is working as a truck driver from using that in his workplace, in his truck.

This law is not targeted at youth, it's targeted at everybody, with very, very tragic circumstances. Three quarters of a million people in the UK: That's nothing to sniff at. There's nothing to sneeze at. That is powerful. If we have really do have compassion in this House, if we really do want to help people quit smoking, to kick that habit, why are we going to such lengths to make it difficult, to impede and to interfere? We should be promoting that over smoking, not restricting it, not condemning it, not demonizing it as if it is a cigarette.

Speaker, harm reduction is a known and recognized and validated strategy. The Supreme Court ruled on it not too long ago with the Insite injection sites in Vancouver, where that injection site provides methadone.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member will take his seat. He knows he's not supposed to have conversations with people in the audience. That goes for the member from Barrie, too.

Continue.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** Thank you, Speaker.

That site offers methadone in replacement as a harm-reduction strategy for those people who are addicted to heroin. We know the federal government moved to make

that an unlawful activity, that harm-reduction site. We know that the Constitution was protected by the courts—the Supreme Court. They said that Insite injection site could not be closed down because it was reducing harm to people. It was a benefit to people.

**2010**

This pales in comparison to methadone. It pales. It pales in its negatives, but it far exceeds the benefits—far exceeds the benefits. This is known: that there are many, many tens of thousands of people who are quitting smoking because of it and reducing the harm in the process. But this government is moving to demonize that harm-reduction technology.

I suspect, Speaker, that if schedule 3 of Bill 45 is adopted by this House, if it is proclaimed into law, there will be a constitutional challenge. It will be done on the same precedent and the same arguments as safe injection sites—as against the security of the individual, the security of the person under section 7 of our Constitution that government cannot, and will be prevented by the Supreme Court, in any legislation that reduces the security of the person and takes away their opportunity to reduce the harm to them.

The associate minister said that this debate is over. I said that it has just begun. I'm asking this Legislature—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** He can laugh. This is important to many, many people. There are—you'll see them tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. at the press conference here—people who are very, very sick from tobacco who have now found a way to get off tobacco. They are very, very distraught that this government is trying to take away their improved health that they're now finding.

This debate has begun, because if schedule 3 gets adopted, if it does get proclaimed, there will be a constitutional challenge. I'll be there with David Swenor, the most effective litigator against the tobacco industry in this province—in this country—a renowned jurist and professor of law at the University of Ottawa. He'll be here at our press conference at 9 a.m. tomorrow. I invite Han to come down and take a listen to what they have to say. I invite the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to come down and listen to what David Swenor has to say. Listen to what Dr. Bhatnagar has to say. Listen to what Andy Prevost has to say when he tells about health. Take a look in Hansard and look up what Marion Burt said to the committee. Go through the Hansard. You'll be astonished; you'll be amazed. I don't believe that anybody who has any empathy for those who are hurting, those who are suffering the effects of ill health because of an addiction, will be so smug and be so willing to hurt them even further with Bill 45.

I do invite everybody to come down to the press conference tomorrow morning. I'm going to ask, once again—Bill 45 has three schedules—I'm asking this government not to proclaim schedule 3 into law. Leave it sit, do some more studies, do some more evaluation, do some more investigation, and, at the end, see if you can still say that that is a demon, if that is a hurtful and ter-



rible product that needs to be banned in this province. Do some investigation. There's no rush. Many, many people have got better health because of that device. Think twice. Think three times. Don't proclaim it into law. Everybody who attended that committee recognized that restrictions on youth on vaporizers would be valuable. Everybody recognized that there are some regulations that would be beneficial. Take your time. Work with the communities. Work with those professionals, those doctors like Bhatnagar, those significant groups like ASH, Action on Smoking and Health—ASH is one of the world's recognized anti-smoking, anti-tobacco groups: "ASH does not support the inclusion of electronic cigarettes in smoke-free laws which would completely prohibit their use in enclosed places." I have a whole binder here of studies, research and evidence that electronic cigarettes or personal vaporizers are indeed a godsend for those who are addicted to nicotine and tobacco.

Mr. Potts—the member from Beaches—East York—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You corrected yourself. I've already warned you not to get into cross-dialogue. I don't want to hear it again.

**Mr. Randy Hillier:** The member for Beaches—East York—I'll read it once again: "ASH does not support the inclusion of electronic cigarettes in smoke-free laws which would completely prohibit their use in enclosed places." I can read a lot more of their recommendations; they've been read into the record in committee. It's unfortunate that the Associate Minister of Health wasn't at those committee hearings to hear that compelling testimony.

You know, the evidence is overwhelming. The hurt that will happen with schedule 3, if it is passed, is overwhelming. Take your time. Take a deep breath. Do some more investigation. We'll work with you. Every amendment that we put forth in the committee was arbitrarily and unilaterally shut down without any discussion or debate by the Liberal members of that committee. We offered up solid, solid amendments that would restrict the use of these things to youth but not impede their use for adults who want to quit smoking. Surely we want to help people quit smoking; we want to reduce the terrible, terrible negative effects on people's health from cigarettes and tobacco.

I do encourage everyone here to come down and listen to David Sweanor tomorrow, listen to Dr. Bhatnagar, listen to Andy Prevost. Here I am, a known smoker, with the anti-smoking groups. Whose side, who do you think is on the high ground here? Who do you think is working towards helping people who are addicted to nicotine? Or who do you think is not?

I do look forward and I do hope that this government does not proclaim schedule 3 into law. I know the Associate Minister of Health has received thousands of personal testimonials from people who have used vaporizers to quit smoking. I know the Minister of Health has. I know the Premier has. I don't know about every other member. Go on my website. You'll see hundreds and hundreds of people who have commented on my petition

about schedule 3 to Bill 45. Read their personal testimonials about how their life is now better and how they cringe and are distraught that this Liberal government is trying to make their life worse in this moral panic to demonize vaporizers. Thank you very much, Speaker.

**2020**

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you very much, Speaker. It's a pleasure to also stand in my place today and speak to the third reading of Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act. This bill bans all flavoured tobacco products including menthol, regulates the sale, use and promotion of e-cigarettes and vaporizers, and requires restaurants with more than 20 locations to post caloric information on its menus.

My colleague from Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington has just given a very compelling discussion. He has invested a lot of time—personal time—researching this bill and sitting in committee during hearings. I know he has done his best to try to find ways, with this legislation, to make it the most effective for the people. He's found compelling arguments, he's cited research, he's cited evidence and he's cited the reality of what could be used for e-cigarettes and vaporizers to help fight additions to tobacco.

He's trying to quit himself. He's trying to quit a trend in his family—I believe he referenced earlier today in his question that his parents smoked, he smokes, his kids smoke. He is trying to stop that. He's trying to find a way to provide for people to have a cessation product that will actually allow them to finally stop that addiction. I applaud him for trying to quit smoking himself and for trying to encourage others—friends, family and strangers—to stop this horrific addiction, and I wish him the best of success.

I applaud him for trying to find a way to amend this legislation so that it can help those who actually have an addiction to smoking with a tool that has been proven to work, so that he can help thousands of people across this great province—across our country—to stop smoking and to save not only them and their family and friends from the harm that smoking does, but also think of the costs that we would save if we didn't have to treat so many people with this horrific addiction.

At first reading, I supported the spirit of Bill 45, but I also saw some glaring red flags, namely, schedule 3, which is a lot of what my colleague just spoke about. It aims at reducing access to vaporizers, a new and popular anti-smoking and cessation device for millions of ex-smokers, and banning menthol-flavoured tobacco products.

In my first time speaking to this in the House, I asked the associate minister to leave schedule 3 out. The first two parts—the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and the Healthy Menu Choices Act—I believe would have sailed through this House with no debate, and it would actually be law today. We knew this was going to be contentious. We knew there were people coming from both sides and that

we needed time to have proper debate and proper discussion to create legislation that is truly going to serve all Ontarians. I asked for that and really didn't receive even the kindness of, "Yes, we'll give that consideration." It was, "No, we're going full steam ahead."

My concerns with these changes were reinforced during committee hearings, after we received testimony from experts in the field—compelling testimony, as my colleague, again, referenced. One lady had smoked for 48 years and the vaporizer, the e-cigarette, actually allowed her to stop smoking. She also shared with us that not only had it allowed her to stop smoking, but she uses it when she's at her computer at night because it takes away her craving for other foods, so it is helping her with her weight concerns that she also shared with us, Mr. Speaker.

Another person said that they were on 12 different medicines before they started using vaporizers. They're down to no medicines now, and that vaporizer has turned them around. Think, again, of the costs—not only the pure physical costs, but the costs to our system, to his family and friends; that he now is living a more balanced, healthy lifestyle because of these things.

Two very specific concerns are that schedule 3 of Bill 45 may undo some of the recent successes of the anti-smoking campaign in reducing smoking prevalence, and it will also be a boon to the criminals who smuggle illegal cigarettes with little change in the availability of a flavoured tobacco product. I spoke about this at length.

No one in our caucus—I don't think anyone in this House—is going to argue that we don't want to ban tobacco products to children. But this isn't about that. We all know of—and many of us have them in our backyards—illegal smoke shacks where you can buy 200 cigarettes for \$8. They're doing nothing about that, and they've had 12 years. So we can listen to all the arguments, but at the end of the day, they could have had this if they truly wanted to stop that. It's not part of this bill. And that was one of the big things—I stood up from day one saying if it had been in there, a whole different conversation might be taking place. But they're trying to smoke and mirrors this, that it's all about kids. If you truly wanted to do that, you would have had this in there.

During my discussion at committee I asked very point-blank: Will you make it illegal for youth to actually possess or sell tobacco, similar to alcohol? They didn't even want to address that. They wouldn't give it the time of day. If they truly wanted to make this about youth and truly take it out of their hands, there were other actions that I wanted to see in there.

I want to get on record that I have never smoked in my life and I remain a strong supporter of the anti-smoking campaign. To me, it's personal. I've lost loved ones—most closely to me, my sister Marj—and friends to cancer. I've endured great loss and heartbreak in my lifetime because of tobacco. Of course, tobacco is the major culprit, but then there are also the other 4,000 chemical compounds created by burning a cigarette, and most of them are known to cause cancer. Combined, these toxic

chemicals kill the equivalent of two busloads of people every day—I believe we have a stat here: 13,000 lives in Ontario; 36 lives every day.

Given this statistic, it's difficult to imagine that kicking the habit of smoking is as hard as it is. But because it is, researchers are always looking at new ways to make quitting easier, or to at least help smokers cut down. We heard numerous people in committee tell us those stories, anecdotal stories across the spectrum of people who had tried everything. I believe, again, my colleague mentioned all the different things that people in his constituency office have tried to no avail. But the e-cigarette—the vaporizer—actually helped them to at least cut back, if not quit.

I think we, as legislators, should support those efforts. We should always be looking at legislation that—yes, there's certainly the prescriptive side that it's not going to do—but we need to be looking at this from the other perspective of the people and the unintended consequences for those people who are now going to have this limited to them. They may actually revert back to smoking regular cigarettes. That is deplorable and unconscionable. We should support the two million people who, every year, try to quit smoking, whether it's with the help of nicotine patches or vaporizers or other different devices. We support them by allowing cessation products to be available so that they can decide which one might be right for them.

Most of my family, other than my oldest sister Marie and myself, were smokers. They tried everything: They tried the patch, they tried hypnosis, they tried bribing with money, they did everything imaginable—but could not. I think, again, when I hear the stories of the people—people like Randy Hillier, who I probably would guess has smoked for 25 or 30 years. Seeing him cut back is obviously a step in the right direction. It can't be nearly as harmful as the harm you get from smoking raw tobacco.

If you want to improve their quitting success or just keep them motivated to quit smoking, then don't restrict their options the way this bill aims to. This is why it is painful for me to watch this government steamroll with the new rules that threaten to undo or to stagnate smoking reduction rates in Ontario.

In committee, we received excellent advice from health experts and others with regard to accepting vaporizers as a smoking cessation tool. The main message on vaporizers was that smoking rates continue to decrease as vaping rates increase. Why would we not be trying to harness that? Why would we not be trying to engage that to allow even more people to improve their health, to stop that addiction of smoking raw tobacco? During the hearings, this government was told that by restricting access to this device, a device that reduces the health impacts that tobacco smoking is known to cause, it will inadvertently increase smoking prevalence in Ontario.

We also heard how the new restrictions and flavour bans will force people addicted to smoking to seek banned products from illegal smoke shacks, and demand



for illegal substitutes will spike. That is, again, unconscionable. If people are going to revert back to that and actually go to those smoke shacks where they can buy 10 times as many cigarettes for the same amount of money as a legal cigarette, that is absolutely unconscionable and deplorable, and we need to give due consideration to that potential.

As I mentioned earlier, I asked the government to make smoking by youth—similar to drinking under age—illegal. They did not even entertain that as a thought process; they would not accept. We, I believe, had 39 amendments that we discussed in committee. Not one of them even really received debate, and none were accepted. Again, how can the government come in and say, “We want to work with people. We want to be collaborative,” and you will not accept one in 39 amendments on something as controversial as this? Goodness knows they could have, if they really, truly were sincere about the health of Ontarians and listening and working with others. They could have opened up to some of those thought processes.

These are the two key unintended consequences you’re creating by limiting and reducing access to anti-smoking and cessation devices such as vaporizers, e-cigarettes and menthol-flavoured cigarettes.

I want to now share some of the excerpts from those key testimonies and submissions we heard in committee. This submission was from David Sweanor. Mr. Sweanor is an established health policy speaker and lawyer; an adjunct professor, faculty of law, University of Ottawa; and an honorary lecturer, division of epidemiology and public health, University of Nottingham.

In his submission, Mr. Sweanor raised an excellent point, and that is that “the public health tragedy of the 14,000 Ontario deaths per year is not from the nicotine they seek, but from the extraordinarily deadly way they get it.” He argues that these vapour devices can save lives. His research is based on findings and advice of the World Health Organization’s former head of tobacco control, Dr. Derek Yach. Dr. Yach was a professor of global health at Yale. He developed the World Health Organization’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, now in effect in almost 180 countries worldwide. As such, I think the minister can agree that Dr. Yach is an authority on tobacco control.

2030

Dr. Yach maintains that these devices can help people quit smoking more effectively than other remedies—more effectively than other remedies, and yet we’re trying to find ways to take them out of the hands of people who are trying their darndest to quit such a huge addiction.

I would like to know why the minister disagrees with Dr. Yach, and more importantly, why she is restricting millions of smokers in Ontario access to this anti-smoking and cessation device.

Testimony from Gary Grant: Mr. Grant is a 39-year retired veteran of the Toronto Police Service and represents the National Coalition Against Contraband Tobac-

co, which is made up of 17 business groups and law enforcement organizations. He said Ontario has the worst contraband tobacco problem in Canada, with one in three cigarettes purchased over the past year being illegal. At \$8 per baggie of 200 illegal cigarettes and no ID nor proof of age of majority required, “the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health has flagged contraband’s easy availability as a prime reason for Ontario’s stubbornly high youth smoking rate.”

I’ve heard it from people right in my own riding. The youth today are smoking those cigarettes because they’re very inexpensive. It’s getting back on trend because they have such access to it that more youth are back out trying. I have two young sons, an 18- and 21-year-old. Thank goodness they’re almost through that phase. But at the end of the day, if they really wanted to stop more youths from smoking, there has to be some kind of legislation that’s targeting and addressing this, which we all know is a problem and has been for many years. They’ve had 12 years and, to my knowledge, have not brought out one shred of legislation to even look at contraband cigarettes.

Mr. Grant also said, “Illegal cigarettes are a cash cow for organized crime with criminals using the proceeds to fund other illegal activities, including guns, drugs and even human smuggling.” Some 175 criminal gangs use the proceeds to finance their activities.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Wow, 175.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Unbelievable, and that’s probably a low number, he tells us.

He said, “The RCMP have identified more than \$100 million in suspicious transactions from one contraband hot spot alone.” Just think of that and the implications, Mr. Speaker.

He said the illegal smoke shacks already offer twice as many menthol products as corner stores. So again, it sounds good in the press that you’re going to ban menthol, but the menthol smoker tells us that they’re not going to stop smoking menthol. They’re just going to go somewhere else to get it. Where are they going to go to get it? The illegal smoke shacks. We get no tax revenue. It’s contributing, again, to that ill health and negative perception, and there’s nothing there addressing it.

Therefore, if 5% of the smoking population buys menthol, then this bill, which bans it, will hand that 5% of business to organized crime. “To put it in clearer terms,” he said, “That’s more than 300 million cigarettes each and every year, representing more than \$130 million in lost tax revenues” for Ontario, money that’s not going to our schools, to our hospitals, to our social and community services. That is a loss that they should be addressing and need to be addressing.

Again, through Bill 45, the province is effectively handing organized crime groups more of Ontario’s contraband tobacco market. Their ask was for the province “to exempt menthol from the flavoured tobacco ban until such a time as meaningful progress has been made on contraband tobacco.”

The federal government has started to take more tough action through Bill C-10, which allows police to lay

criminal charges against contraband smugglers. Ontario, however, is falling behind and has consistently failed to introduce new measures to address this problem. Twelve years they've had, Mr. Speaker, and I again believe there has not been one piece of legislation brought to the floor of this House to even start to address the problem.

I share the coalition's concern. I don't want the contraband tobacco problem to get even more out of control in Ontario.

The other way to help protect children and teens from becoming addicted to nicotine is to crack down on illegal smokes through tougher fines and additional powers for local, municipal and provincial police to lead anti-contraband investigations, as well as greater licensing of cigarette manufacturing materials.

It's heartbreaking. Tobacco-related diseases cost the Ontario economy at least \$1.6 billion in health care annually, resulting in more than \$4.4 billion in productivity loss. Just think again, Mr. Speaker, what that could be doing if we had the reverse of that happening in our economy. We would be creating jobs, not losing them at the steady rate we are, but I'm not even going to go into all of those issues about why we're losing jobs and the high energy costs. And they account for at least 500,000 hospital stays each year. Just think again of the people who could get through the waiting lists, who wouldn't have to sit in waiting departments in ERs for as long across our great province if we could address this problem truly.

Yet tobacco use remains the number one cause of preventable death in Canada. As such, we should be ensuring that it remains preventable through access to cessation products, products that don't contain tobacco, like vaporizers and e-cigarettes.

We also heard from ex-smokers who vouch that vaping helped them quit. I can't remember the lady's name, but again, a 48-year-old person—she was older than 48. She had smoked for 48 years. This is the one and only thing that has ever helped her decrease. She went from 16 mg to 12, to 8, to 4, and almost is done totally. She actually said that she still uses it from that perspective because it stops her, as I mentioned earlier, from actually snacking on unhealthy foods at night, which she used to again do, while she sits at her computer and tries to augment her time.

What a great story that is. One of the challenges that we are going to have is that we're going to limit her. A fear that she shared with us is that it may drive her back to actually smoking again. Why would we even consider going down that road?

We also heard from ex-smokers that vouched that vaping helped them quit. We heard time and again, "I tried every other thing under the sun. This is the only thing that seems to work." That thing, again, is a vaporizer. It does not contain tobacco, the substance responsible for lung cancer. It contains four ingredients: propylene glycol, which again is generally regarded as safe by the FDA and is used in asthma inhalers; vegetable glycerin; food flavour; and nicotine.

But this ministry—the ministry of wellness—argues that it doesn't have any facts on whether or not tobacco-free vaping is a healthier choice than smoking; hence, it's banning it in all places where tobacco is banned. I find this peculiar. Again, they kind of go on the merits of the quick headline. They just think the public is going to buy into this. I challenge the minister and say: If it's not for sure harmful, why would be restricting people who are actually getting off what we know is harmful, being raw tobacco, and not allow this until that two-year—they pushed the federal government to do a study for two years and yet rushed this legislation in prior to waiting for the results of the test that they actually pushed the federal government to do.

This provincial government—I'm ahead of my notes here—actually asked the federal government to complete a study so they could start contemplating regulatory changes. No one was opposed to that, Mr. Speaker. Everyone would buy into that, but at the end of the day what we want to do is work with evidence-based fact. They're using terminology that says that we want to be ahead of the curve; what-if. What if it is dangerous?

What if it isn't? What's the cost to those people if they go back to smoking? What's the cost to those people if their cessation program is moving forward and all of a sudden they fall off track and go back to smoking and all the other ill-health challenges that they experience?

Instead of looking at that study, they put this bill forward and just want to steamroll with it—like they do with many things. One of the members across, I think from Beaches–East York, said, "Why are we debating this?" I would ask him: It's probably the only bill you haven't time-allocated. Very interesting. You time-allocate a whole lot of other ones; why didn't you time-allocate this? I'm glad you didn't, but it's an interesting fact.

Never mind that the experts have advised of the dangerous counter-effects on our youth. Youth smoking surveys show more youths smoking tobacco products from illegal smoke shacks, as I said earlier tonight—the equivalent of two school busloads full of people who die every day. Unfortunately, our kids may start climbing on those buses because of Bill 45, as we heard from experts during committee.

It's important to remember that we're dealing with two million lives here. That's how many smokers will try to quit their habit this year, and how many may not have an easy time of it because Bill 45 will reduce and limit access to vapers and e-cigarettes in Ontario.

I have a problem any time any one of our rules and regulations works to the detriment of people's health and well-being. In the case of Bill 45, that detriment comes by way of forcing the consumer to the underground economy in pursuit of flavours that you've banned, thereby creating a larger contraband market and inadvertently aiding organized crime.

Needless to say, the government voted down our efforts to fix and enhance Bill 45.

With regard to schedule 1 and caloric monitoring we, of course, support it. With families eating out more often



and obesity on the rise, we want consumers to have the caloric information handy so they can make informed choices for themselves.

I would like to see this government make fighting childhood obesity a public health priority in Ontario. It's one of the things, again—every time I've spoken to this, I've tried to implore the government to put more meat in the bill, to actually get our kids more active. I'm a recreation guy. That's what I was originally educated in. I try to walk the talk a little bit here and there, but at the end of the day I truly believe that for our children we need to have more activity. We need to keep not only our youth but everyone across our spectrum healthier. We need to ensure that people actually lead healthier lives, rather than trying to always fix them once they're sick, once they're ill, once they've got to that point.

It would have been good. I tried to encourage the minister to put even more in this bill in the first schedule, the Healthy Menu Choices Act, to make sure that that's one component, but there could have been another whole section in there. Again, she could have dropped electronic cigarettes and made that a whole separate act. They could have kept to the healthy choices and put a lot more information in about healthy, active living.

If we don't, obesity will overwhelm our health budget. It costs the provincial health care system \$4.5 billion currently. That's \$1.6 billion in direct health care costs and \$2.87 billion in indirect costs. Banning junk food and slapping calorie stickers on food is just one part of it; physical activity should be the number one priority.

2040

To everyone listening, to those that may read this later, keeping active for at least one hour a day lowers the risk of heart disease, diabetes and stroke. As I said during earlier debate, your own Healthy Kids Panel urged you to make good on active-living policy, including active transportation, yet Bill 45 has no single mention of physical activity. It's interesting that we've actually provided this, they've actually had their own panel on it, and not any of that made it in. They are certain, and they continue to steamroll schedule 3, the Electronic Cigarettes Act, which, again, is a hugely divisive issue out there and needs more time, more discussion and more clear thinking.

Again, I'm going to stand here and suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that this bill has good intentions. I still, however, remain concerned over schedule 3. There's clear, undeniable scientific proof that tobacco products cause cancer and other diseases. We support efforts to limit the exposure of young people to tobacco products. Obviously, I would hope everyone in this House would have that same thought process. But let's not throw the baby out with the bathwater. We need to be looking at what's truly going to prevent kids from smoking—and take those tools out of the hands of those people who want to put them in their hands. That's not what this specific schedule is about. It's also about restricting access to an anti-smoking and cessation tool, and as the experts advised, I fear the counter-effect of the new rules.

This has been a really interesting bill to be involved in. It truly has been—I don't know if a lesson in democracy, but maybe a re-emphasis on what democracy is. I came to this bill when I first read it and said, "It's got smoking in there. I'm anti-smoking all the way," as I shared earlier in my comments.

I've had personal loss that will never, ever leave me. I've said in this House prior and I'll say it again: Watching my sister Marj at 43 years of age die in a hospital room as I watched that black whatever-it-is go through her system and out of her system was the most horrific thing I will ever see in my life, I think. If I could retrace that and try to get her to stop, and if a cessation tool like an e-vape was going to be the thing that stopped that, I can't fathom that anybody with good conscience in this House or anywhere else would not actually take a look at this and say, "You know what? There may be an unintended consequence. We need to take a second look at this. We need to slow this down and really see if there's an inadvertent consequence," so that people like my sister Marj aren't going to suffer due to someone having an ideological thought process and streamrolling it through because it makes headlines and it's easy to sell to the general public who aren't really looking at it from a legislative capacity.

It was horrible to watch; it was horrible to even think about that now and understand that we're actually not taking steps in regard to things like contraband, like making it illegal for youth to possess and sell, and yet we're trying to make everything look like the world's going to be fine; that if we just steamroll and get this bill passed tomorrow, smoking is gone. That's not going to be the case.

I sat through all of the committee. I was there every day of the committee and heard every single word that was spoken in that committee. I have to tell you, it was very interesting to hear the people come out and speak from their side, whether they were for or against. Again, it's a divisive issue. There are people who are absolutely adamant: "I don't care. It's going to go through. This is the only way to go." There were certainly people on the other side who are using this as a cessation tool who gave compelling evidence to show that there are benefits to using things like e-vaporizers.

It was very interesting to hear how many people wanted to speak. In my little more than three years being here, this is probably the most compelling and engaging piece of legislation. There were people who were writing in, calling in; they wanted to come and appear before committee. Normally, you can hardly get people to come to committee, other than, again, the standard organizations that you know are going to be here. These were individuals from across the province, from all walks of life.

We asked a number of times to be able to extend it. We wanted a significant extension, but at the end of the day we asked for one extra day to allow some of those people who wanted to participate in democracy, for perhaps the first time in their life, to be able to come to

Queen's Park and give their testimony. Again, the Liberals did not even consider that thought process; they turned us down on a dime. We've negated democracy again, we haven't listened to the people who truly wanted to be part, and then we wonder why our voting records are the way they are; why voter turnout is on the decline continually.

It was also challenging because I'm a health care guy from day one. I'm usually the guy who stands in this House proudly and supports groups like the Canadian Cancer Society, the Ontario Cancer Society, the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Lung Association. I'm usually their biggest champion. I hope I still am, in their eyes, deemed to be that. But I truly, in this case, had to say that there is another side to this. We need to listen to those people who want e-vaporizers to be able to be legal across the board. Again, we're not talking about youth smoking; we're talking about the restrictions and the requirements. I asked again on behalf of those workers, those people who travel in a courier van, for example, who are only by themselves—there's no one else around them—to put an exemption in that they could. A crane operator—there are 228 cranes, at last count, I believe in the skies in Toronto; there's no one who's going to be in their workspace, Mr. Speaker, but they are not going to be allowed to have an e-cigarette. Why not, if that's going to be the thing that helps them to stop? They're in there for eight-, 10- or 12-hour shifts, and we can't find a way to give them an exemption to be able to utilize that as a tool to help them stop smoking.

Mr. Speaker, these were not outlandish things; these were not partisan things. These, in my mind, were rational things that we brought to the table asking the government, "If you're truly intent on making the health of Ontarians better, you would actually consider and debate and include this in your bill." Not one of those went forward. Again, I find it sad that we couldn't do that.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Not a single one.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Not a single one. We had 39 different amendments in committee. Not even one really got debated; zero actually got included in the bill.

There's nobody in this room who can tell me that they're so smart that they can write something, and they can't accept one more improvement. It's a sign of arrogance. It's a sign that "We've got an agenda, and we're going to move it forward," as opposed to the rhetoric in question period: "We're here to listen. We're here to collaborate. We're here to work with all three parties." It certainly was not indicative—if you sat through that or watched the tapes or read Hansard of that debate—of a party that truly wanted to listen and make the absolute best legislation that is going to truly have a positive impact on the health care of Ontarians.

I tried very much—during first reading, second reading, in committee and here tonight again—to find a balanced approach. I've stated unequivocally that I'm the most anti-smoking guy that you're ever going to see. But I do believe in this case that there are valid arguments.

There is science on our side. There are experts with testimony who are prepared.

My colleague is having a forum tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock, I believe, that I encourage everyone to come out to, especially the associate minister and the Minister of Health—and all of the colleagues who are supporting them—to hear that expert testimony so that, as my colleague asked in his half-hour address, we slow this down and take schedule 3 out of this and not put it through and have inadvertent unintended negative consequences to the lives of Ontarians.

Mr. Speaker, the associate minister earlier this evening suggested that everything that needs to be said on this issue has been said, that the debate is over. I would actually respectfully request that the minister give sober second thought and truly open her mind to other alternatives here. We can actually take this piece of legislation and make it even better than what it is today, with the health of Ontarians truly in mind. If she's really that sincere and truly convicted to making the best legislation for those people who she represents—who we all represent—then she'll step back and listen to some of the science, some of the testimony.

There are a number of deputants, as I say, who didn't get to speak—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Which one is the associate minister over there?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Well, the associate minister, I believe, is not with us, although I'm not certain if I can say that, Mr. Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I believe you were set up on that one by your friend. You will withdraw that.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Withdraw, Mr. Speaker. It was just that he knew that I was getting dry and needed a drink of water. I'll take fully responsibility for that remark.

But I do implore the minister, the associate minister and anyone else associated with health or not to be there tomorrow morning to hear the compelling information, the research and the actual facts that are going to be shared tomorrow morning by a number of very credible guest speakers at the member from—I've got to get his—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Lanark—Frontenac—Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you. I never get his riding right. I just call him "Mr. Hillier;" it's easier, but I can't do that.

This bill, as I said earlier, has three parts to it. Under the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2014, owners and operators of regulated food service premises are required to display the number of calories in each standard food item sold at the premises, as well as any other information required by the regulations.

Again, in committee, we did hear evidence and concerns from other organizations saying that in some of these large—over 20 outlets, a franchise-type set-up—we tried to suggest that you could have one counter menu. You don't have to have it on every single piece in the



store because of the volume—grocery stores. There are other ways it would actually be just as beneficial to the public. They could see how many calories, what they need to know. There are better ways, and not one paintbrush covers everything. So we asked for some of those type of considerations. None of that; nothing was considered.

2050

We heard compelling evidence, I believe, from the U of T about sodium. I again found this very interesting. They actually suggested that sodium had to be one of the two crucial elements, along with calories, put onto the labelling. I still haven't understood—and I asked the associate minister, again a number of times, why that wasn't considered, without any real explanation other than, "This is what you have. This is what we're moving through, and we believe this is the best way to go." Why, again, will they not accept evidence from experts? The U of T is a pretty renowned institution in this fair city. They've done their homework. They had experts do all of the study, and yet it's still not in there.

So, Mr. Speaker, I challenge again, when they're coming out saying, "This is going to be the best legislation; we truly, sincerely have the thoughts and cares of the Ontarians we serve at heart," why they wouldn't do that.

There were a number of things in that piece of legislation. We were trying to find ways to make it effective. Obviously, all of us support it. I'm certainly going to be a guy who's going to support healthier eating and healthier opportunities. But at the end of the day, let's figure out what the public really wants. What are they going to use as a tool, as opposed to us deeming, "This is what you should do, and because we say it, it makes it right"?

We had a number of people, again from both sides, in this debate. They shared ideas with us, but I didn't see much in the way of any amendments or revisions to that piece of legislation changed either.

We are definitely supportive. It's a step in the right direction. Anything my colleague Mr. Hudak from—

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** No, that's his. I do know that.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Bill Walker:** East Lincoln.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Niagara West–Glanbrook.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Niagara West–Glanbrook. He and I were speaking earlier. If you put something as simple as a heart-healthy checkmark on a menu, that at least triggers you to say, "You know what? I have a conscious choice here. I can eat the healthier one or some of the less healthy." I don't necessarily pay attention to the label saying how many grams and how many calories. I just need to understand. I think there are other ways we could have done a lot of this more cost effectively without putting yet more burden onto those business owners.

We had a number of challenges in regard to the franchisee and franchisor. The person who actually is the franchisee does not own. They are the day-to-day man-

agers, but they lease the opportunity to run that business from the franchisor. But the franchisor could be held responsible, despite not even being on-site with the serving of those products. So again, we simply suggested that here is a valid discussion; here is a valid argument. We need to look at this, and we need to build it into the legislation so we're not inadvertently impacting and negatively impacting or impacting that franchisor when it's something that they have no hands-on control of. Again, there was very little discussion in regard to whether they would even give consideration to that.

A number of assorted amendments were made to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. The sale of promotional items together with tobacco products is prohibited. Again, I don't think there's any issue with that. The sale of flavoured tobacco products is prohibited, subject to power to prescribe exemptions. Again, one of the challenges we had there was that people have said, "If I've smoked menthol for 20 years, I'm not necessarily not smoking menthol tomorrow. I'll just go down the road to that illegal smoke shack and buy it there." There are more flavours there probably than on most of our convenience store shelves.

Again, it sounds good. We're getting rid of all flavours. They tried to bring it all back that that's exactly what induces youth. Maybe go out and talk to some of the youth who've actually started smoking in the last year and ask them what the real issue and the real driver was for them to start smoking. And 99% of the young folks I've talked to, it's from contraband cigarettes that have very easy access and very low costs. They're the ones we're trying to protect. We could have quite easily solved the problem, and not one word in this legislation about contraband tobacco. I can't say that again.

I'm going to go back and just review some of my notes because I think they're valid and worthy of speaking about. Banning the marketing of tobacco products to children is an important step forward, but we also need to shut down illegal smoke shacks. I don't know how much simpler I can say that, Mr. Speaker. We're all in favour of no access. I again pointedly asked the associate minister to include provisions to make it illegal for youth to actually have, sell and have access to cigarettes—similar to alcohol. It seems to work. Now, maybe a few people in this House might have had a beer before they were of legal age. Not many may admit it, but that might have happened. But at the end of the day, most people, when it's illegal, respect the law and they won't do it. Why would we not make this a similar law as we do for alcohol, which again has a negative impact on people's health? Why would we not do this for cigarettes if we were truly intent? Why would we not take every opportunity to limit the ability for them to have access to tobacco products?

Childhood overweight and obesity are on the rise, and again we need to make it a public health priority. I didn't see one real thing in this piece of legislation—despite their panel telling them. The title of the bill, the Making Healthier Choices Act—you would have thought they

would have at least put one minor little thing in there to try to encourage youth and, in fact, all ages to live a more healthy, balanced lifestyle, Mr. Speaker. But at the end of the day, they truly focused more on schedule 3, and that's what most of the debate turned out to be on.

As I've said here a couple of times—certainly earlier—if we had had schedules 1 and 2, this piece of legislation I think would be law already and we'd be living it. It would be in action; it would be making a difference. Schedule 3 should have been taken out. It should have been debated totally separately, and they should have done a lot more consultation. Not one of their strengths is going out to actually talk to the people before they try to bring these things forward. This is yet another one of those that we're going to go out—a lot of people, thousands of people, are utilizing e-cigarettes to try to stop them from smoking, and we're going to take that opportunity away from them, at least in the fullness that it could be.

The Liberals argue that, "We're not making it illegal; it's going to be the same as cigarettes." We get that, but there are also arguments that people need these. There isn't the same second-hand smoke coming off these that is proven to be dangerous to people's health. "Precautionary principle" I think is the big buzzword they were using, and trying to sell that to the public, that, "We're going to be the keepers of you. We're going to tell you what's good, and we're not going to take any chances." At the end of the day, they're not concerned, Mr. Speaker, with that precautionary principle of contraband tobacco. I keep coming back to that because if you listen to the bulk of the people in most of our ridings who have concerns about tobacco and why it's on the increase, that's what we need to be targeting. We need to be looking at that and addressing that if we truly want to impact the health of Ontarians.

We spent a lot of time listening to people—or certainly I did and my colleague did, when we were in debate and listening to those people come in. We wanted to hear a lot more people. As I said earlier, there were a lot of people that were engaged. They actually came to Queen's Park; they wrote letters; they sent emails. I believe that Mr. Hillier has 20,000 people on his website, on his electronic signature, that have signed up for that. That's amazing, how many people have gotten involved and want to turn their lives around, want to become healthier. All they're saying is, "Allow us the opportunity to use a tool that is the only tool of all the things I've tried in my life to be able to beat this."

Mr. Speaker, I hope that today I've been able to present a balanced discussion on this matter. I actually again extend an invitation to all of the Liberals across the floor to come out tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock in the media studio to hear these experts, hear the other side of the story and give due consideration. If the associate minister truly is convinced about making the lives and the health of Ontarians better, she'll step back from this. She'll actually say, "You know what? There is an ability to pull this out. I can let the other two go through, and

we'll make this the stronger, more effective legislation that truly will have a positive impact on the people of Ontario."

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It was interesting to hear what the member of the PCs has to say. I agree with them wholeheartedly on one part of what they said: It's that we have seen people through that process that, for the first time in their lives ever, they came in front of a committee and they wanted to be heard. They got engaged in the democratic process like it should be. Those were not the usual suspects who know the routines and know how to come in and get there with their pieces of paper all ready. None of that; those were people that were usually scared out of their wits because they had never been here before, and coming to Queen's Park is not always a very welcoming affair.

They had made it through security, found their way to the right room, and then you call their names and they get to sit in front of this microphone. You can see them shaking. They are so nervous, but they wanted to be heard. They really took the time out of their lives to come and talk to us, talk to the politicians, to people they believe are there to represent their voice, represent who they are. They told us their story and they came. Hundreds of them put their names on the list. It was really heartwarming, in a sense, to see that finally people who I'm guessing hadn't voted in years, people who had never paid attention to what's going on in here, all of a sudden wanted to be engaged. They wanted their democracy to work for them. They wanted to be part of it, but rather than giving them an opportunity to be heard, we limited debate, and hundreds of them who would have taken part in the political process for the first time in their lives got the door shut in their face. That was wrong. I agree with what my PC colleagues said: That was wrong.

2100

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I rise, on behalf of my constituents in Cambridge, to add my support for Bill 45. I've said many times in this House that I'm a nurse who has cared for so many patients who have been suffering from lung cancer. I'm very supportive of the measures contained in Bill 45 that will protect our youth, and that will prevent them in the beginning from even starting smoking.

I listened to the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, who called the bill disgusting. I have to say, as a nurse, that I find that very offensive. As a matter of fact, the member can ask the associate minister himself to reacquaint him with the bill, line by line, if he so chooses. But the member and Marion Burt, who came to the committee, can continue to use e-cigarettes to reduce their cigarette smoking; certainly a goal I applaud. E-cigarettes will be available, except to youth under age 19.

My son Liam McGarry is in grade 12 right now. He tells me that some of his schoolmates will not be smok-



ing anymore if they don't have access to either flavoured e-cigarettes or to menthol. That's from somebody who is actually there.

I'm not sure, but I'm quite sure that the member from Lennox, Addington, Frontenac and Addington—I will get that name correct—is probably over age 19, and he will be able to continue to purchase e-cigarettes. Under the proposed legislation, we'll be banning the sale and supply of e-cigarettes to anyone under age 19, and require retailers to request ID from anyone who appears to be under 25 and wishes to purchase e-cigarettes.

I support Bill 45. It's only restricted to those who are under age 19. Those who wish to continue using e-cigarettes who are over age 19 will be able to continue to do so.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to commend both the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington and, of course, the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound. I sat and listened for the hour, and it was quite interesting. I intend to go to that news conference tomorrow, and I'd suggest that all of us who are available go there tomorrow; maybe we can all learn something. I'm over 60 now, and there's not a day that goes by that I don't learn something new. I'm sure that many members of this House could learn some more.

Maybe we should take a look at section 3. I know that I've heard from a number of people in my constituency as well, who are confined to long-term-care facilities and obviously can't smoke in there; they're confined to their beds or to the ward. They're going to really miss these e-cigarettes. They're worried about access to them being banned entirely, because it's the only way they've been able to quit smoking—it's the politically correct thing to do.

I don't want anybody to think I'm—I quit 35 years ago; I quit smoking in 1980. I smoked up until then. I never heard of e-vapors, vapes—whatever they are. It was difficult. Quitting was easy; staying off them was hard. Quitting was easy; I quit two or three times. I did. I should have quit a lot of other things, too, but I didn't.

I certainly sympathize with people who are trying to quit. I certainly urge the government to take a look at section 3. Don't do the politically correct thing; don't necessarily think you've got this right. Maybe take time to take another look at this, and let's do the right thing for those people who do want to quit smoking cigarettes.

I have very close friends and family whom I would like to see go this route, use these vapes and quit smoking, because it certainly is an insidious habit. The smoke shacks are still going to be out there. I've never heard anything about these smoke shacks. Nobody wants to tackle that. You won't hear that brought up in here today, or at any time, by this government.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I also want to say that I appreciate the comments from the member from Lanark-Frontenac-

Lennox and Addington—man, that's a long title—and the member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound.

I'm very pleased that the Conservatives support the idea that there should be a posting of sodium or salt content in food. My colleague from Nickel Belt gave an extensive exposition on the amount of salt that there is in very common fast foods, and I have to say I was pretty taken aback, particularly with the Thai vegetable stir fry. I sort of expected it with chicken nuggets, sure; they almost glisten with crystals of salt on them. But most salads—you think there's kind of a pass. So it does make sense. It's not easy; it's not visible to the eye that there are large amounts of salt that have been shaken on top of some of these foods. I think the member is quite correct that we need calorie labelling, but because of the cardiovascular impacts it also makes tons of sense at the same time to make sure people know how much salt they're getting with the food that they're purchasing.

I differ with the Conservative members about their response to schedule 3. I think there should be regulation of e-cigarettes. I don't think there's any question that when someone is smoking an e-cigarette, they have the potential to be putting nicotine into the air. I would say that all the arguments we've had about tobacco in the past, about the need to protect non-smokers, to protect people from second-hand smoke, are as valid in this situation as they were in the fights that we went through in the 1980s, 1990s and in the last decade about second-hand smoke.

This schedule 3 doesn't ban e-cigarettes, but it does actually protect people who don't want to be smoking involuntarily. On that basis alone, that section should be supported.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound has two minutes.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Thank you to all those who spoke.

Nickel Belt: France Gélinas is always thorough in her research. It's a pleasure to serve in committee with her. I think the one thing that she reinforced again is that limited debate, the sadness that we weren't allowing democracy to truly, fully run its course on an issue that is so controversial and divisive.

To Cambridge: Obviously we all agree with protecting youth. That's a no-brainer. No one even has to talk about that. You referenced your son Liam. I wonder if you have the conversation with him about the smoke shacks, because when I talk to my sons Zach and Ben, that's where they hear the bulk of it coming from. It's not flavoured, it's nothing else; it's smoke shacks.

The concern that my colleague from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington has is not that he can't get access to them; it's actually the limitations put on them. I've never smoked, so I really don't understand just how challenging it is, but I applaud my colleague, who quit after 35 years. You need to be able to have something when you have that drive to have a cigarette. That's what he's trying to suggest to you. If this can allow people to stop smoking regular tobacco—that's what he has concerns about. There are ways that we can do better

legislation to allow people to have access, and it has nothing to do with youth.

My colleague from Sarnia-Lambton—I'm just going to suggest—I think most people on the opposite side always clap for Bob. They like Mr. Bob from Sarnia-Lambton. He's had two PMBs; he's actually listened to people and he has worked collaboratively. Maybe you could take some pointers from him and take this piece out and ensure that that gets done. Again, I want to commend him for being able to quit smoking after 35 years.

To the member from Toronto-Danforth, thank you very much for your comments.

I'm going to summarize by suggesting again that there are people, there are seniors, veterans of our great country, who again have started using these because they have had that addiction for 50, 60, 70 years. They want to comply; they want to do it. We're going to take them out of their hands, potentially, which is really a shame.

Mr. Speaker, I implore the associate minister to pull schedule 3 and to give more time and more thought to ensure that this is the best legislation we can put forward to truly make healthier Ontarians.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I am very pleased to be able to rise in this House tonight to speak on Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act, on behalf of the people that I represent in London West. I have to say that it is a real honour for me to be the first speaker up in my caucus following the leadoff from my colleague the member from Nickel Belt. This is a member who knows this file inside out. She has been working on this issue tirelessly for over eight years, since she first was elected in this Legislature. She has introduced 11 private member's bills on issues around calorie menu labelling and stricter tobacco controls, and she was also one of the first MPPs in this Legislature to raise some of the legitimate concerns about the lack of regulation of e-cigarettes.

**2110**

As the member for Nickel Belt pointed out in her very thorough lead-off speech, New Democrats support this legislation, but we do have some very significant concerns about the missed opportunities that this bill represents by the lack of measures on sodium labelling.

Bill 45 has three schedules. The first schedule concerns calorie counts on menus for food service establishments that have 20 or more locations. These new measures will apply to approximately 11,500 restaurants across this province, 15 grocery chains, 14 convenience store chains and two movie theatre chains. So the reach of this requirement for calorie counts is quite extensive, although frankly we would have preferred to see it even broader.

The second schedule of Bill 45 introduces new provisions to ban flavoured tobacco. This is a very significant initiative to address the rates of youth smoking. We know—and I'll speak to this later—that many young people, when they begin smoking, first try flavoured tobacco.

The third schedule of this legislation, which my colleagues over on the PC side of the House have spoken at length about, are new provisions to regulate e-cigarettes. This simply brings the regulation of e-cigarettes in line with the regulations that we already have in place for cigarettes. As others have pointed out, this is reflective of the precautionary principle. It's reflective of the fact that the research is inconclusive about the potential negative health impacts of the vapours that are released by e-cigarettes. We need to do the responsible thing and put measures in place to protect people from the potential ill health effects of the nicotine that could be released by e-cigarette vapours.

I'm now going to address each of the three schedules in some detail. The provisions around calorie counts: This is something that we have had in place in this province for more than a decade on the packaged food that you can buy in grocery stores. I know that I and those of us who do shopping for our family often check the nutritional information that is on packaged goods so that we can ensure that we are making the healthiest choices, the best choices for the people who we are preparing meals for and, of course, for ourselves.

Unfortunately, however, more and more of us are eating out. We're not preparing food at home. Without requiring restaurants to provide this kind of nutritional information, we don't know what kind of calories we're consuming or what kind of sodium we're consuming unless, as the member for Nickel Belt said, we go to extraordinary efforts and ask people in some of the outlets to get this information, which they may have tucked away in a stockroom. The new provisions of section 1 in Bill 45 will make this information much more accessible to many, many more Ontarians.

This is particularly important for children. There is research showing that children consume twice as many calories in restaurants as compared to the calories they consume when they are at home. We've all heard the stories of the epidemic of childhood obesity that we are seeing across this country, in fact. In the US, it's a very high-profile public policy issue as well. It's a public policy issue because there are significant financial costs associated with the negative health outcomes that are related to obesity. In Ontario, there are estimates that, overall, obesity costs this province \$1.6 billion in direct costs and \$2.9 billion in indirect costs. So there are significant financial implications if we don't do something to address rising obesity.

We also know, from recent research from the Centre for Science in the Public Interest, or CSPI, that the costs of overconsumption of sodium are also very, very high. They estimate that about half a billion dollars are spent in Ontario each year to address high blood pressure—hypertension—that is associated with the overconsumption of sodium. Unfortunately, despite all of the evidence that was presented to the legislative committee that looked at the bill during clause-by-clause, Bill 45 does not require sodium content labelling. Going back to what I said earlier about the importance of Bill 45 for children,



sodium content labelling in particular was recommended by the government's own Healthy Kids Panel. So we see the lack of sodium content labelling requirements as a real oversight and a real missed opportunity.

We know that providing consumers with nutritional information can really—it can trigger people to change their behaviour. When people know what kinds of sodium counts are in food, what kinds of calorie counts are in food, when they compare different menu items, they will make different choices once they have that information. Providing that information is critical to get those kinds of behaviour changes that we seek so we can have better health outcomes for all Ontarians.

Despite the testimony, the input, that was provided by more than 40 community group leaders who went to the committee, who spoke about the importance of sodium labelling, the government decided, in its wisdom, that they didn't want to support those amendments. I am aware that some of the Liberal members on that committee, when they were opposing the sodium labelling, said that there were labelling experts on the Healthy Kids Panel who were concerned that there might be too much information for consumers if there were both calorie counts and sodium counts. But, interestingly, as the Centre for Science in the Public Interest points out, these so-called experts were representatives of the companies that would be directly affected by the bill. So one has to wonder whether these experts were really speaking in the public interest or whether there were other commercial or industry interests at stake.

There is also a concern that has now been raised that without sodium labelling and with only calorie labelling, you could actually have one of these perverse incentives where consumers actually start to choose foods that are higher in sodium than they would otherwise because they're trying to select foods that are lower in calories. We know that, for years, restaurants—chains, in particular—have snuck sodium into menu items and have increased the sodium content because, for whatever reason, our palette finds high-sodium foods more attractive. So when chains have to lower sugar content and make changes to their menu formulations in order to reduce calorie counts, they might increase the sodium counts, and that's a very real concern.

2120

We also know that it is very difficult to estimate what the calories are in menu items and what the sodium content is. This was pointed out very effectively by the member for Nickel Belt when she threw out those little quizzes to try to guess which was more.

Nine out of 10 Canadians support sodium labelling, just as they supported nutritional information being placed on packaged goods in grocery stores, so this is something that people in Canada want; it's something that Ontarians want.

Across the province we're seeing more and more awareness at the community level and more and more efforts being made locally to try to improve eating habits and promote healthy foods. I just wanted to highlight

three initiatives in my community that I'm particularly proud of that really speak to this community-based effort. In London, we have Growing Chefs!, which is a charity funded by the Trillium Foundation. It's a program to engage professional chefs and farmers, growers, along with teachers, educators and community members, to get kids excited when they are at school about healthy food. So the goal of Growing Chefs! is to help children develop better eating habits by understanding how food is grown and where it comes from. The purpose of the program is to give children hands-on experience growing and preparing their own food, thereby improving children's eating habits. The research has shown that it does reduce childhood disease and obesity when children are empowered with the knowledge of where healthy food comes from.

Another initiative we have in London is called the Food Hub. This is a program that was developed by On The Move Organics in London. That is a company that has been involved in the bicycle delivery of organic food boxes to individual homes since 2008. They are scaling up to create the London Food Hub, which is a model based on Foodlogica in Amsterdam. It uses electric-assist tricycles—in the case of the London Food Hub, these are going to be cargo tricycles—to develop a sustainable, efficient and cost-effective urban food distribution network. This is a very exciting initiative and something that I think is really going to have an impact locally.

The third initiative that I wanted to highlight that shows how people are embracing initiatives to support local food is Western University's HEAL. The researchers involved in this lab are looking at the food system, particularly urban food deserts, and trying to assess what it is that drives food retailers away from urban areas and small towns, how we can increase access to nutritious foods in these neighbourhoods and what viable strategies exist to encourage healthier consumption.

Western's HEAL also has developed the Smart APPetite, which is a smart phone app and a website which is designed to remove barriers to finding local and healthy foods.

Speaker, my community certainly understands the importance of calorie labelling, and we also understand the importance of sodium labelling. We are going to continue to push to have the government move forward on this initiative.

I want to turn now, in the little time that I have left, to schedule 2 to ban the sale of flavoured tobacco, but it also—and this is of some concern to us on this side of the House—allows cabinet to exempt certain flavoured tobacco products from being included in this ban.

We know that adding enticing flavours to tobacco products has been a tried and true marketing strategy that tobacco companies have used for decades to grow their customer base, to get new customers hooked on smoking. Most problematically, flavoured tobacco is a particular inducement to encourage young people to start experimenting with tobacco. We feel very strongly that these amendments to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act are critically important to reduce smoking rates among young people.

We know that the latest Youth Smoking Survey showed that a majority of young people who smoked in the last month smoked flavoured tobacco. In fact, some people would say that menthol is a product that only older people use, but the Youth Smoking Survey showed that almost a third of youth who smoked in the last month had smoked a menthol cigarette. So menthol is, in fact, the most popular flavour of flavoured tobacco.

We believe strongly that the government needs to be very clear that menthol will be included in the ban on flavoured tobacco. We believe very strongly that the government must not bow to pressure from the tobacco companies, who want to see menthol removed from the ban on flavoured tobacco, and we must be very clear that menthol will be included in the ban.

We understand that the language of the bill for a future date on the implementation of the ban on menthol could mean as much as two years before we see this put in place. It could mean more than two years; it could mean 20 years. We believe strongly that this must go ahead, and we must be very clear that menthol will be included.

I just wanted to share with members of this House a statement that I received from a high school student in London. His name is Jack Zhan; he's the co-chair of YouthCan, which is a London youth group that meets monthly to plan activities involving cancer prevention, advocacy and fundraising. Their slogan is "You are never too young to make a difference in the fight against cancer." YouthCan organized many different events across my community of London. They collected over 1,300 signatures in support of Bill 45.

Jack wrote to me and said, "As a teenager, I truly believe Bill 45 is a crucial bill to be passed.... Flavoured tobacco is a sneaky and deceptive tactic used by the tobacco industry to attract youth into smoking in order to replace the dying smokers. If this bill passes, the future would look a lot brighter for us youth today. End the flavour by passing Bill 45!"

I want to honour Jack's words. I want to see Bill 45 passed, and I want to see menthol included in the ban on flavoured tobacco.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to respond to the member from London West. I am fully in support of Bill 45, and I'm pleased to hear that she's supportive as well.

She did mention the ban on flavoured tobacco and quoted statistics that we've all heard throughout this debate which say that about half of youth smokers use flavoured tobacco, and about a quarter of youth smokers use menthol. So the ban on menthol is really crucial to ensuring that our young people do not get hooked on cigarettes. We all know the consequences of smoking.

I want to assure her that the intent of the legislation is not to wait for 20 years to ban menthol. It is in the legislation—

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Not necessarily two years; up to two years.

2130

**Mr. John Fraser:** Up to two years, as I've been reminded by the associate minister. Thank you very much.

I also wanted to mention her support of menu labelling. I do hear what she is saying about salt content. I know that there's not agreement yet on what are appropriate levels of sugar and salt. What we do know is that prepared foods are often high-content sodium for preservatives. I think people should be aware of that. We do need to start with the menu labelling we have right now. I do agree with her—we're going to have to look at salt—but I don't think we're quite there yet. I appreciate her comments very much.

Her highlighting of the food initiatives in her city: I want to highlight one that we have in Ottawa South, which is a food bus that brings fresh fruits and vegetables to communities that would have a hard time getting access to them at grocery stores.

I do want to add one thing for the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington—I just wanted to say that—and Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound: It is not a ban on e-cigarettes. Adults can still purchase e-cigarettes. It's an important part of the bill that we make sure that youth don't use this as a gateway to start smoking.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Let me stand on Bill 45, Making Healthier Choices. I've been sitting through this for almost three hours now, and it has been interesting how the debate has gone. The Conservatives are talking about e-cigarettes; I find that interesting. The Liberals just want to shut down debate. And the NDP, under our MPP from Nickel Belt, who tried to pass this for seven years—think about it, seven years. In fairness, seven years.

Then, she is saying, which I think is fair—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It would be interesting if you guys would listen.

It's interesting so far to say, "Well, why wouldn't we take a look at sodium being included in a health bill?" What we haven't looked at in the three hours I've been here is what is in the best interests of our kids and our grandkids when it comes to healthy choices. Nobody has talked about kids; nobody has talked about our grandkids. What are we going to do to stop obesity among our kids? Well, here's a way we can do it and support local communities: We can use locally grown produce in our schools, supporting local farmers. What happens with that, if it's made locally and the fruits and vegetables are local? Guess what it has less of? Anybody know on that side? Salt. Sodium. I think that would be a good idea.

What I think we should actually do is take a look at our schools. As we put portables on playgrounds because we're closing schools, why don't we make the playgrounds a little better so the kids can still play soccer, play basketball, which would help them stay in shape?

I did learn something today. After I go home from here, one of my favourite meals, quite frankly, is Kraft dinner and hot dogs. Now I'm not the best cook in the



world, obviously, but my staff told me tonight, from listening to this, that that gives you three times the amount of sodium you should have in your daily diet. So I've got to find something else I can make. I thought I'd throw that out.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I'm pleased to be able to speak to this bill. I think there have been a number of important things said. There are a number of aspects to this bill that I think are important and could really impact the health of Ontarians in a positive way.

One aspect of the bill that I want to focus on—it's been raised on a couple of occasions—is the menu labelling piece. When I think back, this reminds me of how food was handled in our home when I was a child. I remember that my mother was really careful about what she fed us. I do remember going to school with my lunch kit and sometimes being disappointed at what was in my lunch bag. Now, I'm so pleased that I was disappointed at the time, because the reason I was disappointed was that I didn't have all the sweet and unhealthy things in my lunch bag; I had healthy things.

I remember, as I grew older, that I didn't always understand how to determine what was healthy and what was not. To me, what I learned about health, or certainly remember learning when I was young, was that what was most important was that you consume each of the four food groups in any given day. As it turns out, that's not specific enough. That's not enough knowledge to make the informed decisions we need to make. That's why I think this bill is important, because what this does through the menu labelling component is it ensures that people are going to be armed with the information, or some of the information—a lot of the information that they need to make healthier choices.

That's really what we're doing. We're not telling them what to eat or what not to eat, but we're giving them the information they need to make an informed choice. I think that's fundamentally important. It's fundamentally important for the health of the next generation. Posting calories on menus and menu boards in restaurants, particularly larger ones where there are multiple locations, would cover a significant amount of the food we consume and certainly even a larger percentage of the food that's unhealthy that we consume. Making sure the information about that gets posted is important. I think that will impact the health of people of all ages for years to come but particularly young people, and they'll be armed with even better information and be even healthier than I was.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

Seeing none, I'll return to the member for London West for her reply.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** Thank you very much, Speaker. I want to recognize the members for Ottawa South, Niagara Falls and Etobicoke Centre, who offered their comments on my remarks.

I am glad and appreciative of the comments from the member from Ottawa South, who acknowledges how crucial it is to include a ban on menthol, and we will hold the government to that commitment. We would have liked to see it included from the beginning, but we will certainly be watching to see it moving forward.

The member from Ottawa South says that the government is not there yet on sodium labelling. I'm not too sure what it will take to get the government there. When you had your own appointed panel, the Healthy Kids Panel, as part of the Healthy Kids Strategy, recommending sodium labelling, when you had over 40 presentations to the committee endorsing sodium labelling and when you had all of the organizations and experts that were mentioned by my colleague for Nickel Belt endorsing and urging the government to move forward on sodium labelling, you really have to wonder what more the government needs.

Nevertheless, I think that the member from Niagara Falls has some great points about the need to engage children at school if we're really serious about taking effective action to address rates of childhood obesity and encourage healthy eating.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** It's a pleasure for me to provide a few comments this evening on Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act. We've had speaker after speaker talk about the three pillars of the bill, which require fast food restaurants to display calorie counts for menu items; the prohibition of the sale of flavoured tobacco products, including menthol cigarettes; and also the new restrictions that the government is going to place on electronic cigarettes. Many speakers have talked about the banning of the sale to anyone under 19, but there are also restrictions on the display and promotion of e-cigarettes.

I want to say, off the top, after reviewing Hansard and looking at some of the committee hearings, I do have some trouble with the premise that passing this piece of legislation is going to suddenly see Ontarians make healthier choices. The government can't legislate good health or healthier choices. We've got to create, as a Legislature and as legislators, more education. We've got to create that base in our school system to be able to teach people about smoking and about the perils of sodium, to use a page from my New Democratic friends. I think we have to have an education-first premise when we look at providing healthier choices for our community. We have to give people knowledge at an early age. I think we have to do a number of things, not just deal with some of the issues that the government is talking about today.

2140

The member for Nickel Belt, at one point in her speech today, talked about how people don't look at calorie intake on a menu. She asked her colleagues to put their hands up if they had ever done that. I was one of two people who put their hands up, because it's something that you have to learn—there was a third one; the Attorney General has put her hand up.

I had to do it because I have a child who has a peanut allergy, so reading labels—looking at the ingredients on labels, looking at the calorie intake and looking at the sodium intake—just became natural for our family because we did that. But that was something that we had to do, and it became a way of life.

What's not in this bill, Speaker, is that we also have to promote the fact that we need our society to become more active. We need to teach our young people in schools to lead active lifestyles. We need to be able to combat obesity and really deal with that because of the increasing strain we have on our health care system.

We just have to make sure that we deal with this bill, and I know there are going to be many speakers tonight.

This bill only received five days in committee. It was a process that I think you see over and over again with this government. You've got legislation brought through, but yet there are examples where this government really shows their inability to manage our economy; there are many issues that come forward every day during question period. When we deal with the bills, we've seen this government continually shut down debate and shut down voices to be heard across the province. People expect us, when they elect us—all 107 MPPs have the duty, when a bill like Bill 45 is brought forward, to bring the views of our constituents forward.

There's also a process, Speaker, as you well know, that deals with committee. I can remember coming here for the throne speech—I've said this many times when we're dealing with debate—the fact that the Premier wanted to do things differently, the fact that she wanted to choose partnership over partisanship. Yet debate after debate—Bill 45 is again something where they get into committee and vote down amendment after amendment, good amendments that are put forward by the opposition parties. Again, that's why we're back here. That's why you hear the level of frustration from New Democrats when they stand up and express concerns about sodium and the displaying of sodium levels. That's why you hear members like my friend the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington express concerns about constituents and e-cigarettes. That's something that I feel we need to get to the root of to change. We can't continue to choke off debate in this Legislature.

I want to go back to my caucus colleague the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington because he talked about a concern he had during committee about the process for this bill. He noted how so much of this legislation is a bit of an unknown because it's going to be determined with the regulations. It's a process members of this House aren't going to have a role in. We don't have a role, as members of the opposition, in dealing with the regulations.

So what happens, when the government takes the time to listen to more witnesses in the province, is, I think it makes a better bill. When a government decides to have a full debate in the Legislature and take opposition ideas and suggestions, I think it makes a better bill. When you don't do that, Speaker, I think you have some unintended

consequences, and I'm going to talk about that a little later.

I'd urge the government members to go back, as some of my colleagues have said tonight, and look at the committee transcripts. Go back and look at some of the suggestions that were put forward, some of the testimony that was presented at committee, some of the evidence that was presented. If they do, I think they'll see that some of the members in my caucus did an excellent job raising some significant red flags about where those unintended consequences lurk in the bill.

Again, my caucus colleague who spoke earlier tonight, Mr. Hillier from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, really brought forth some compelling evidence about one of the components of Bill 45 which was his concern—and I think it concerns me, as well—about the electronic cigarettes.

It's interesting that one of the most compelling reasons we've heard about the need for the restrictions this bill puts on e-cigarettes is that it's seen as a gateway. I think the member for Ottawa South even used the word "gateway" in his last two-minute hit. The theory goes that they normalize smoking for youth, who then graduate from vaping to smoking tobacco.

Everyone—and I think that also includes the vaping industry—supports restrictions to prevent devices from being in the hands of our kids. But as I mentioned at second reading debate on Bill 45, I heard first-hand about the need to also get tough on marketing tobacco-related products to young people. For those who were in the House during second reading, I talked about a meeting I had in my constituency office earlier this year, where I met students from Gananoque Secondary School: Jeremy Somerville, Carly Hart, Rayna Hachez and Jonathan Lancaster. They wanted to meet with me because they came to the Freeze the Industry summit last fall, and they talked a lot about initiatives to reduce tobacco use among their peers. I have to tell you, I was very impressed with those student advocates and how they related what they learned about those marketing initiatives to their own experience at GSS. The bottom line: The marketing works.

I obviously don't, for instance, want to see e-cigarettes being marketed in stores where youth shop. I think that's a given. But I think we need to draw the distinction between the type of marketing—and allowing adult-only vape shop owners to display and demonstrate the effective use of a product. I don't think you can equate the two.

In terms of the gateway theory, I think the member for Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington asked a key question on this point at committee. He asked a vape shop owner how many non-smokers wander in off the street because they want to start vaping. The response from the deputant was, "The general consensus of every customer coming in the store is, 'I'm a smoker and I don't want to smoke anymore.'"

I think it's an important health matter, so we need to focus on absolutes here. We need to ask ourselves what



we know, not speculate on what we think is true. We know that customers buying these devices in vape shops are smokers who are trying to quit a habit that could kill them. We also know that the industry supports the government initiative to prevent e-cigarettes from being marketed to youth. Most importantly, we have evidence from studies that vaping does help some people quit smoking. In fact, many people feel it's one of the most effective devices that's available. The committee also heard testimony to the fact from Dr. John Britton of the UK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies. Here's his quote from the committee about what his research has found regarding the effectiveness of e-cigarettes:

"In smokers, the evidence in the UK is that about 20% of smokers now use electronic cigarettes on occasion and about 700,000 or 7% of all of our smokers have quit using electronic cigarettes exclusively, and that's more than we achieved by other tobacco control measures as a single initiative—a very quick initiative." I repeat: It's the most effective tobacco control measure that these people have found.

Later, Dr. Britton added this word of caution to the committee: "What we don't want—and what I would counsel against; that's why I contacted you—is regulation that makes it hard for smokers to make the sensible choice to switch to electronic cigarettes." I don't think I want to see that either.

I took the time earlier to go to an e-vape shop in my riding. I talked about it at second reading. For many MPPs, we got hundreds of emails, maybe even a thousand emails. When I went to Kemptville and spent time with Don LeBreton—I want to thank him for being so patient with me. I spent a lot of time in his store. I talked to a lot of his customers. He was a former smoker who ended his addiction because of vaping. He tried just about everything. After 46 years of lighting up, the e-cigarette was his ticket to quit. I guess you could say, if you want to use that word, that for Don, vaping was his gateway to quit. That's his experience. He's a non-smoker; it's his new life, and he feels very passionate about it. I spent, as I said, a lot of time. He has been very proud that he has been able to have a whole bunch of people join the ranks of ex-smokers. It was fortunate for me to see some of these people who were pack-a-day or more smokers. They felt they had a new lease on life because of that product.

2150

So there is a worry that I have that we're going to find unintended consequences from Bill 45; that this cessation option needs to be available to more smokers, not fewer smokers. It's ironic that a bill entitled the Making Healthier Choices Act might actually make it more difficult for people to make this choice, for them to end this deadly habit.

I want to commend my caucus colleagues for their work at committee to raise the issues and bring forward some reasonable and practical amendments. I think adopting them would have improved Bill 45 and removed those unintended consequences. I know specific-

ally they spoke about schedule 3 of the bill, that there were some specific requests regarding that by a number of members tonight.

I want to move, in the time I have, to another smoking-related aspect of this legislation—it has been mentioned many times tonight—which is the ban on flavoured tobacco, including menthol products. There was an interesting column in yesterday's Sunday Sun regarding this government's dismal record on contraband tobacco. Certainly, that's important reading in the context of tonight's debate on Bill 45. That's because another unintended consequence when this legislation is implemented is that more people are going to be turning to the illegal cigarette market. The most damning statistic in the Sun's article was the fact that globally the illegal tobacco market accounts for one in every 10 cigarettes smoked. In Ontario, the figure is astounding; it's one in three. So we have another example of how the government has made Ontario a leader in a field where being number one doesn't make you a winner. If I hadn't been familiar with the issue because of my job, I'd have thought, when I read the Sun story, that it was a misprint. Unfortunately, I know full well in my riding and in many ridings across Ontario that that's the case.

Seeing it in the context of that global figure really brought home to me just how poorly this government is performing when it comes to butting out the illegal tobacco trade. It's not surprising that when you combine a lack of enforcement with the fact that you can buy a bag of 200 smokes for about eight bucks, people are going to go that route. The author indicated that Bill 45's ban on menthol cigarettes is just going to add fuel to that fire and it's going to drive more money in the underground economy. I think anybody who has ever smoked knows that smoking is an addiction. Many will tell you the nicotine habit is far away the hardest one to break. So somebody who is addicted to menthol cigarettes isn't going to stop smoking on the day that this product disappears from the shelves, not when there's an underground economy that is ready, willing and—you know what?—thanks to the lack of enforcement more than able to fill the void. That's a big concern.

If you go back to the author of that Sun story, they predict that the menthol ban will drive more than 300 million cigarettes a year in the illegal market. Remember, these products are sold in bags, without health warnings, and they're sold to people regardless of how old they are.

We brought forward an amendment to the committee to remove menthols from the list of banned products. However, I think the reality on the ban, regardless of whether an amendment passed or it didn't pass, is it's not going to be a ban. The underground market is going to fill the void. This government has put no resources to deal with the void, and I really believe you can't have this bill move forward without some significant dollars put on the table for enforcement to try to deal with contraband tobacco. You have to do it. At the end of the day, I don't think the number of menthol smokers is going to change much. I think we have to put those dollars—

you're still going to see smoke shacks. You're still going to be selling baggies of smokes out of the back of cars and in the vans all across the province. Our health care system is still going to deal with those consequences. Our provincial treasury won't see—the finance minister is here; he's not going to see that provincial revenue in his coffers when the market goes underground.

On this section of the bill, I also hope that when we hear from the associate minister—and I'm glad she's spent so much time in the chamber tonight. I want to commend her for doing that. I think she needs to let people know of the time-frame limitation. There's a lot of people that have requested that. I've had lots of calls at my constituency office from business owners about when the bill passes—whether there are some who are going to have a health inspector swooping in on them. I think the government owes them a straight answer.

It was good to see that there was some clarification given to the restaurant industry on the caloric posting section of the bill at committee. As we all know, and I think the minister mentioned earlier, the January 1, 2017, date rather than proclamation by the Lieutenant Governor—that wasn't the case with the schedule of the bill that dealt with menthol, and I know that she made some comments earlier. I think people deserve a specific date so that they know and they can plan to do that. So that would be helpful if the associate minister could give us a clear indication on how that will work.

I mentioned earlier an initiative in my riding with my local RNAO, and I know there are some new members of the House here tonight for our wonderful midnight sitting. I'm very proud that during my break week I spent time with nurses to talk about a new RNAO initiative with my local health unit. I was very pleased to see that they were chosen. We'll be working with RNAO on some best practices that I do think mirror Bill 45. I do think that there is an opportunity for them to look at making healthier choices for our young people. Smoking cessation was a part of it.

I want to wrap up my time by saying that I hope I've been able to talk about how our caucus, through committee, has been very reasonable with some of their amendments. I want to congratulate all of them. I know we're getting into the last couple of weeks of the session, but I just want to congratulate my Ontario PC caucus. They've performed exceptionally in committee. They've provided reasonable amendments. They've tried to put evidence before ideology, and I happen to think that if their amendments would have passed, we would have had some better pieces of legislation. I think we would have better pieces of legislation if we hadn't had so many time allocation motions from the government House leader. I think we would have had better legislation if we would have been able to travel some bills around the province so that we could hear from all corners of Ontario.

I've got other comments I'm going to make in my final two minutes, but I think we could have done better with this bill; I really do.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to be able to speak in this Legislature and provide some comments to the member from Leeds–Grenville on Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015, and on and on. First of all, I'd like to thank and acknowledge the member from Nickel Belt for all her work on the basis of this bill.

I would also like to commend the member from Leeds–Grenville on—I didn't agree with all his points, but he provided a very reasoned argument, and I always appreciate that. It's a good way to debate in this House. Perhaps the member from Nickel Belt's next focus is going to have to be illegal cigarettes. Maybe that, as with other focuses that she has done in the past, will move this government to actually take some steps, because illegal cigarettes are a huge issue. They're an incredibly huge issue.

**2200**

I disagree that we should change Bill 45 or lessen Bill 45 to combat illegal cigarettes. Bill 45 is one part of the toolbox, and fighting the illegal cigarette trade is another. It's interesting that the price of illegal cigarettes seems to be fairly uniform across the province. He mentioned eight bucks a bag, and that's about what they are in my neighbourhood. That's kind of interesting. But it is a huge issue, because when you're trying to help people make better choices, it's a combination of regulation, education and actually focusing on the issues that are most pressing at hand, which this bill does to a point.

The member from Nickel Belt mentioned sodium. It should look a lot closer at sodium, and I think, as a Legislature, we should make a much bigger emphasis on the illegal cigarette trade.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** First of all, for those who are watching this debate at home, I just want to note the time: It is 10 p.m. on Monday evening. The reason I note the time is because I want our constituents to know that we are working hard on their behalf to get Bill 45 passed as quickly as possible to make sure that we have a healthy society for all our citizens, especially our children.

Speaker, this bill has been debated now for roughly 15 hours, combining both second and third reading debates. Over 75 members of this Legislature have spoken to this bill. By and large, the debate I'm hearing is that members are supportive. They're supportive to ensure that we have calorie counts on our menus so that we can make conscious decisions. They're supportive to make sure that we end flavoured tobacco and regulate e-cigarettes. I agree. I think we need to pass this bill as quickly as we can in order to do so.

I don't know about other members, but during constituency week, I had the opportunity to meet with both the members of the Canadian Cancer Society and the Heart and Stroke Foundation from my community of Ottawa Centre. In both instances, they urged me—and I



know they have been tweeting all of you—that we pass this bill before June 4.

So here I am at 10 p.m. on Monday evening, and I say to them: We hear you. We, on the government side, want to pass this bill as quickly as possible. We urge the opposition members to stop filibustering this bill, to let this bill pass so that we can make sure that we have a healthier society. I urge all members to support me in that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the speech from the member from Leeds–Grenville. I want to commend the member from Leeds–Grenville on his thoughtful, thoughtful comments.

I think, as he pointed out, this bill is really a small step towards healthier living, but there are lots of other important parts that have not been addressed. He talked about the fact that you can't legislate good health, that we should be focusing more on education first, and of course, healthier living—getting our youth in particular into more exercise with the hope that that will combat obesity and get them into doing activities that keep them exercising their entire lives.

He also pointed out that the opposition brought forward many different amendments at committee, and the government didn't listen to any of them. I'm sure there must have been some reasonable amendments amongst the 31 or so amendments that were put forward, but none of them were approved by the government. That's indicative of the way the government is operating, and it's unfortunate because the bill could have been improved.

He did talk about the fact that there may be unintended consequences, and in particular with contraband tobacco, and the fact that the ban on menthol is just going to create a whole new market for contraband tobacco. That will be the menthol market, as the people who have smoked menthol cigarettes for years and years and years are now just going to be buying these \$8 bags of cigarettes but there won't be, as the Minister of Finance said, any taxes paid on it. So I think a very important point that the government has talked about but so far has not addressed is the whole contraband tobacco market that's somewhere between one in three or as much as 50% of the cigarettes sold in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I too want to talk a little bit about contraband tobacco. It is a huge issue. There is Atikameksheng Anishnawbek in my riding that is a 15-minute drive from downtown Sudbury. Sudbury, it is known, still has a smoking rate of 28%. Twenty-eight per cent of the people in Sudbury, Nickel Belt, smoke, compared to the rest of the province, which sits at 18%. The First Nation is on my way home. I drive right in front of it every time I drive home. The number of people who turn in there—it is a small First Nation; I think they have 200 houses on the First Nation and they have at least, I would say, 20 smoke shacks, and they sell cigarettes to all of the 28% of the smokers who make up the people who live in Sudbury. I'm sure some buy it at

the corner store, but a lot of tobacco gets sold out of that First Nation as well as many other means of contraband tobacco.

There are some best practices out there that exist that help us get a handle on contraband tobacco. I don't understand why Ontario is so, so passive toward this. If we just look to Quebec, they have started to basically tackle contraband tobacco and have had some significant success. Some of those successes could have easily been just copied here in Ontario but were not. I don't understand this disconnect, and it needs to be addressed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thanks, Speaker. I want to thank the members from Timiskaming–Cochrane, Parry Sound–Muskoka, Nickel Belt and also the government House leader. It's interesting that the government House leader talks about legislation. I see his EA, Jackie Choquette, here. It looks like she's probably drafting a closure motion on this bill as we speak. I'm not sure; we'll find that out soon.

I want to raise a point again that I raised at second reading as a reminder to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I spoke about a meeting at second reading that I had with Wendy Preskow and the National Initiative for Eating Disorders. We talked about the potentially devastating impact on a person with an eating disorder of walking into a restaurant and being bombarded with calorie counts on full display. Wendy's group represents about 600,000 Canadian men and women afflicted with an eating disorder, and they're genuinely concerned about the effects of this measure on the people they represent. As I mentioned, they don't want to block this from being implemented, but they do hope to raise attention to the fact that there could be consequences for people. That's what I spoke about earlier, the unintended consequences.

And you know what that means, Speaker? It means that we need to get serious about a strategy in this province and in this country for those who have an eating disorder. We need to get them into treatment.

I wanted to put on the record the fact that, again, I've written to the minister on this matter. I raise it again today. I raised it at second reading. I'm eager to work with Minister Hoskins and Wendy and the National Initiative for Eating Disorders to try to do something about it. So I raise that again as my two minutes, and I hope we can do something.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's always a pleasure to rise and speak on behalf of my constituents of Windsor West. This is my second time speaking to this bill. I had a chance to speak to this bill in March at second reading, and today I'm glad to have a chance to revisit some of the concerns I raised.

**2210**

Speaker, I ask for your indulgence because I had some notes, but as the conversations have happened around the

room I've scratched things out and put new things in. So it may take me time to shuffle through papers and find things.

I wanted to start off with the comments from the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. He stood up and he stated the time. It's now 10 minutes after he stated the time. He mentioned that they're working hard, and I would point out that there are those of us on this side of the room that are still here as well. So clearly we're working hard on this side. But immediately after saying that they're working hard, he then said basically that they've had enough; they want to quit and go home. I don't know if they want to go to bed or watch TV; I don't know what. But we're interested, on this side, in sharing the concerns of our constituents.

I would also like to point out that the member from Niagara brought up an interesting point during his two minutes earlier. He talked about his favourite meal being mac and cheese with hot dogs, and how he has now learned that's not the healthiest option; there's a lot of sodium in it. I'd like to point out that if the government goes ahead with their plan to sell off hydro, many people are only going to be able to afford to eat mac and cheese. I don't think we really want to see that happen, so they need to consider that.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to speak about our record when it comes to anything health-related. We've put health promotion on the political agenda here in Ontario. Long before the Liberals were interested in health promotion, New Democrats were working to protect the health of Ontarians by banning flavoured cigarillos, introducing mandatory calorie and sodium labelling, banning youth tanning beds, and prohibiting new flavoured-tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products.

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's okay, Speaker. I can talk louder than them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I appreciate that, but I have to be able to hear you. I'll ask the government members please to be quiet and allow the member for Windsor West to make her comments such that I can hear her. She has the floor.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker. I appreciate that you're interested in hearing what I have to say, even if they're not on the other side.

Our health critic, France Gélinas, has introduced at least 11 private member's bills dedicated to menu labelling and prohibiting the sale of new tobacco and smokeless tobacco products. If you'll indulge me, I'll go through the list of bills that she has introduced.

Bill 156, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2009, which was introduced on March 10, 2009: The idea of that bill was to require food service premises with total gross annual revenues of greater than \$5 million to disclose nutritional information for the foods and drinks served and to limit the amount of trans fat in these restaurants' food and drink. Unfortunately, that bill died on the order paper after being referred to committee.

Bill 90, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2010, which was introduced on June 2, 2010: The idea of that bill was to require food service premises with five or more locations and gross annual revenue over \$5 million to display the number of calories contained in the food and drink items they sell. Unfortunately, that bill died on the order paper as well.

Bill 176, the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act, 2011, which was introduced on April 4, 2011: That bill was to prohibit the sale and distribution of new tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products. You probably won't get this, Speaker; you probably wouldn't be able to guess, but that one died on the order paper as well.

Bill 66, the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act (Prohibiting Flavoured Tobacco, New Tobacco Products and Smokeless Tobacco), 2012, introduced on April 17, 2012: That was to prohibit the sale and distribution of new tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products. That bill also died on the order paper.

Bill 86, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2012: It was introduced on May 8, 2012. That was to require chain restaurants to display the number of calories in each item, make nutritional brochures available and indicate clearly which items have high and very high sodium content. That bill also died on the order paper.

Bill 126, the Health Statute Law Amendment Act (Healthy Decisions Made Easy), 2012: That was introduced on October 2, 2012, and that was to prohibit the sale and distribution of new tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products. That died on the order paper as well.

Bill 59, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2013, which was introduced on April 29, 2013: That was to require chain restaurants to display the number of calories in each item, make nutritional brochures available and indicate clearly which items have a high or very high sodium content. That bill also died on the order paper.

Bill 130, the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act (Prohibiting Flavoured Tobacco, New Tobacco Products and Smokeless Tobacco), 2013, was introduced on November 18, 2013. That was to prohibit the sale and distribution of new tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products. You guessed it, Speaker. That one died on the order paper, as well.

Bill 149, the Health Statute Law Amendment Act (Healthy Decisions Made Easy), 2014, was introduced on December 5, 2013, to prohibit the sale and distribution of new tobacco products and smokeless tobacco products. That died on the order paper after being referred to committee.

Bill 38, the Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act, 2014, was introduced on November 18, 2014. That was to prohibit the sale of promotional items with tobacco products and to prohibit the sale of flavoured tobacco products, subject to a power to prescribe exemptions. That one is currently awaiting second reading.

Bill 47, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2014, was introduced on November 25, 2014. That's to



require chain food premises with 20 or more Ontario locations to display the number of calories and any other information required by regulation. That bill is currently awaiting second reading.

Speaker, if nothing else, I think this shows the dedication of our health critic, the member from Nickel Belt, to ensuring that those in our communities across the province are able to make healthy decisions, to have the opportunity to see what's in their food, to be able to understand the downsides of smoking, of tobacco products, so that those in our community can make informed decisions when it comes to their own health.

While we're glad that the government is finally listening to New Democrats and putting health promotion on the agenda in Ontario, the bill still falls short in several key areas. At committee, New Democrats gave the government the opportunity to address these concerns, but apparently they've stopped listening to us. In fact, the member from Nickel Belt moved 17 amendments in committee, and the Liberals voted against 16 of those amendments, such as immediately banning menthol tobacco products and mandating sodium labelling on menus—which only makes sense, considering the bill mandates calorie labelling.

Speaker, I'd like to point out that in previous debate, the member from Scarborough Southwest, from the government side, during his time to speak to it, said that not only should there be menu labelling for sugar but it should also contain sodium. During the same debate, the member from Mississauga—Streetsville, also from the government side, stood up and said that there should be sodium labelling but, unfortunately, just not now; maybe some time later. There's support from the other side for sodium labelling, but I'm not sure why now isn't a good time to be labelling sodium.

I know the people in my riding would like to be able to walk into a restaurant and make informed decisions. As the member from Nickel Belt shared during her hour lead, sometimes it's very surprising: You think you're making a healthy choice, and then you find out that what you've chosen actually has two, three or four times more sodium than you're supposed to have in a single day.

Many of our amendments focus on sodium labelling. This bill should also include provisions that mandate sodium labelling on menus. Calorie labelling alone does not give the consumer enough information, as the research on the dangers of diets includes high levels of sodium. The Dietitians of Canada indicate that the average Canadian takes in 3,400 milligrams of sodium a day. That's surprising to me, and I'm sure that I probably fit into the average category as well. Again, that's because when I walk into a restaurant, it's not labelled. As the member from Nickel Belt had brought up, when you order a salad, you think you're probably making the healthiest decision on the menu, only to find out that it possibly could be the worst—maybe even worse than ordering a hamburger.

Health Canada defines high sodium as 360 milligrams. As mentioned several times during this debate, fast-food chains serve products that contain over 1,500 milligrams

of sodium. That's alarming, Speaker, especially when you think, when you go in, that you're picking something that is low in sodium—better for your health—only to find out that it's often two or three times more than that. Organizations like the Ontario Medical Association support sodium labelling legislation.

2220

I note that I had members from Heart and Stroke in my office, and they were applauding our efforts to get sodium labelling put on menus. They think it's a very important thing. You know, it's a great teaching tool. If we talk about education, it's a great teaching tool for adults to be able to take their children in and teach the children how to understand what is on the menu, and how to make healthy decisions. I'm not sure why there's so much resistance to adding sodium labelling to menus.

OMA supports sodium labelling due to the extremely high sodium levels in restaurant foods, which can lead to high blood pressure, a leading cause of illness and premature death. Speaker, that goes back to what I said from Heart and Stroke, where they said they believe it is very important to add sodium labelling to menus.

The Toronto Board of Health has already urged the provincial government to require the posting of sodium in addition to calorie information, and to apply this new menu labelling requirement to food service chains with 10 or more locations in Canada.

Sodium labelling on menus is a way to allow consumers to make informed choices about what they're eating. This is important, and the research supports this. We also need to make sure that Ontarians have healthy options to choose from. Knowing how much sodium you may be ingesting does little if you are unable to choose a healthy alternative. Think about this in the context of cafeterias in schools or on-site restaurants at workplaces. We need to encourage the availability of low-sodium options for Ontarians.

Of course, some of the best food options are the fruits and vegetables grown in my riding and the surrounding areas of Windsor and Essex county. I'm counting down the days until I can go to the market on the weekend and pick up some delicious cucumbers or peppers, talk to the person who grew the food and have some time to prepare a meal for my family.

The farmers' markets in my riding and across Windsor and Essex county are just starting to open up, and I can tell you that it's very important to the people in Windsor and Essex to be able to go to the local market, support the local growers, be able to talk to them and find out just where their fruits and vegetables were grown, and to obtain information about making healthy choices.

With so many great markets to choose from, we're spoiled in southwestern Ontario. The last time I brought up the markets in my riding—there were many of them; they stretch out not only in my riding but out into Essex county as well—

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** You guys might want to listen to this. It's about local markets. You might want to stop heckling me and actually listen.

Speaker, the last time I brought up the local markets, it started a bit of a battle here. I talked about the local markets in Windsor and Essex county, and then the next speaker on the government side got up and started talking about the wonderful markets in their ridings, and then members from the PC caucus got up and started talking about markets in their ridings. We had, I guess we could say, a healthy competition going on, talking about who had the better markets in their areas.

I'd like to boast a little bit about my particular riding and out into Windsor and Essex county. We have the Downtown Windsor Farmers' Market. That's not just those who grow fruits and vegetables locally, but we also have local bakeries that are able to tell you what they put into the breads and desserts they've made so that you know they're gluten-free or you know they're made with whole wheat or you know how much sugar they put in it. So even the local people who bake are able to give you an opportunity to know what's in your product before you're purchasing it from them.

We also have the Ford City farmers' market, Windsor Market Square, City Market Windsor, Riverside Farmers Market, Midtown Farmers' Market and, of course, moving out toward Leamington, there's the Leamington Farmers' Market, along with markets in Lakeshore and Amherstburg.

Speaker, again to boast, one of the best things about the summertime in Windsor and Essex county, aside from the festivals we have along the riverfront, not only in my riding but in the riding of Windsor-Tecumseh, my colleague's riding, is to be able to take the family for a drive on a weekend out into the county, out into the riding of my colleague from Essex, and to stop at all the little local farmers' markets and talk to those who have grown vegetables. You know often what is sitting out at the farmer's stand was fresh-picked that day. Often they'll share stories about—these are farms that have been in the family for years, and they're able to share some of the wonderful stories about their family farming.

Speaker, it's often difficult to operate farmers' markets, and they face a growing number of challenges. I think it's important to encourage their operation and long-term viability. Sourcing your food from farmers' markets is a sure way to achieve a low-sodium diet. Although the pressure of daily life, the convenience and, to be honest, the taste—for some—have more and more Ontarians eating their meals in restaurants, I think shopping at farmers markets is a great way to inspire one's love for cooking, even if it's only when you have time to do so.

Much of my time today was focused on the need to include sodium labelling on menus, and I hope I made a strong case for its inclusion in this bill. When I'm talking about farmers' markets, though—just let me find it in my notes—something that's important when we're talking about making healthy choices is people actually having access to healthy foods. By that I mean not only knowing what it is they're eating and what's in it, but being able to afford it. Eating healthy food is expensive for Ontario

families and it is not always available. It is often more convenient and more affordable for families to eat fast food or high-calorie processed foods, which are readily available in the corner store and vending machines.

According to Toronto's Board of Health, the cost of nutritious food increased 5.4% between 2013 and 2014, as measured by the Nutritious Food Basket. I have some alarming numbers here, Speaker, about the increase in cost of healthy foods. This is based on cost in Toronto. We look at peppers: They've gone up 27%; broccoli, 25%; lentils, 24%; oranges, 24%; iceberg lettuce, 23%; sweet potatoes, 18%. Green peas, cabbage and potatoes: The cost has gone up 17%. Beef, fish and chicken have gone up anywhere between 13% and 15%. We need to make sure that healthy food is available and accessible financially for everyone. And in order to make it so they can afford it, we need to make sure that the cost of everyday living is affordable to families.

I've noticed I'm almost out of time, Speaker, but because I talked a lot about healthy foods and food labelling, I wanted to talk in here about e-cigarettes and flavoured tobacco. I know there has been a lot of talk from the PC caucus about electronic cigarettes. What I found interesting during debate—and I'd like to draw some attention to it—was actually the member from Beaches-East York, who stood up and said something: "I've never used an e-cigarette. I've never been exposed to someone who does use e-cigarettes, so this was a learning experience for me." I thank the member from Beaches-East York for that.

He stood up and talked about the flavoured e-cigarettes and that often they'll smell like—well, here it mentions they smell like chocolate martinis, or, he said, they often smell like baking bread. There's a concern around that, about kids being exposed to that and then going out and getting e-cigarettes and starting to engage in using them, and by doing that they then could segue into actually using cigarettes. So I think it's important to point out that there does need to be regulation. Certainly, as the member from Beaches-East York pointed out, we don't want kids being exposed to something like that and getting hooked on cigarettes and then, down the road as adults, having an issue with it. We all know the health costs associated with smoking—I lost my father to cancer—so we certainly don't want to promote smoking in children. I think it's very important that we make sure that children do not have access to something that could smell like apple pie or bread and entice them into using the products themselves.

That's it for my time, Speaker, and I thank you for your indulgence.

2230

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I welcome the opportunity, as I always do, to have a chance to lend my voice to the discussion and debate that's occurring here in the Legislature around Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act.

Of course, this has been mentioned, I believe, by members on this side of the House over the course of the



debate, but it feels, certainly listening to individuals speak, including the member from Windsor West and others who've spoken from the official opposition caucus this evening, that the opposition parties are taking the opportunity to, I think, needlessly extend debate, especially since, broadly speaking, there is significant support in this Legislature—and why wouldn't there be for this bill, when you take into account all that's included in the legislation?

The bill has now been debated for 15 hours at second and third readings combined. Over 72 members of the Legislature have either spoken to this bill or participated in the debate during questions and comments. Of course, the government extended debate beyond the six-and-a-half-hour threshold so that more members would have the opportunity to speak to this bill.

For those who are watching at home, either watching live at this precise moment or, perhaps, those, Speaker, who have PVRed the debate to watch it at a future point—those individuals, Speaker, would probably wonder why the member from Niagara Falls doesn't include kale, for example, in his magical recipe for Kraft Macaroni and Cheese and, I believe it was, hot dogs. But I know that individuals watching would be thrilled to hear the delightful tour that the member from Windsor West just took us down with respect to all of the exceptionally wonderful farmers' markets that exist in her community and beyond.

As entertaining as it is for us on this side of the House and for all Ontarians who care passionately about finding creative ways to make this province and the people who live in this province healthier—as fascinating and as entertaining as it is for us to hear these comments that are put forward by members from both the PC and NDP caucuses, it's important for this bill to pass; it's important for it to become law.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** The member for Windsor West gave us quite a rundown on all the various pieces of legislation that have come forth and have ended up falling off the order paper. With Bill 45 we have kind of a culmination of so many pieces of legislation, and it looks like it is a bit of a dog's breakfast, mixing menu labelling with e-cigarettes and flavoured tobacco.

I describe it that way because I really wonder when we're going to be debating legislation with respect to what I consider the elephant in the room, which is illegal tobacco. I represent an area—and there are areas just north of me—that is dominated by illegal crime that has moved in on the illegal tobacco trade. I'm not aware of tractor-trailers of e-cigarettes coming through the border or travelling at night, or cube vans with—we're probably going to see cube vans full of menthol cigarettes if that is restricted in the province of Ontario.

The nature of this market—and it makes up a third to perhaps half the tobacco smoked in Ontario: Low-income people and young people smoke contraband cigarettes. The market is not there for e-cigarettes; it's not there for

menthol. These people make an awful lot of money. It contributes to an increase in the consumption of tobacco because of the price, and with such a highly taxed product as tobacco, it's obviously price-sensitive.

We've seen 12 years of Ontario government tax increases. That has no effect at all on people who pay zero taxes by smoking illegal tobacco.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I think it's my second time speaking on this bill, but I just want to say to the members on that side who have kind of made a joke about Kraft Dinner: There are a lot of families in the province of Ontario who actually live on Kraft Dinner, so I just want to make sure you understand that. I just wanted to say that.

I want to say to the people who are probably at home sitting by their TVs watching this rather than watching the Chicago Blackhawks play in the playoff game that we all come here for a reason, and the reason is trying to make it better for our communities from one end of the province of Ontario—from Niagara Falls, up north; doesn't matter where you are.

I want to say to our health critic, because I think this is important because there are other people who have done it—let's take a look at what she did because she cared about health. That's why she's the health critic. Think about this: Bill 156 was turned down, but she didn't give up; Bill 90, Bill 176, Bill 66, Bill 86, Bill 126, Bill 59, Bill 130, Bill 149, Bill 38, Bill 47—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Bill Mauro.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** You know, for whatever reason the transportation minister likes to make fun and light of stuff, but I'm actually being serious here.

What I'm trying to say is that people who are at home watching this program tonight want their people to come and try to make things better for them, but it's not easy to do. It's not easy to get a bill passed in this House. It's not easy to get your colleagues to support a bill. It doesn't matter whether you're a Liberal, a Conservative or an NDP; it's not easy to do.

I just want to say to our health critic that, because she hasn't given up, this bill is going to get passed. I think there's no doubt about that. I want to say to her that, because she didn't give up, that's going to happen.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Before I ask for more questions and comments, I would ask the House to come to order. We're going to be here for another approximately 90 minutes.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** It's a great pleasure for me to speak to this bill. I believe it is my second time speaking to this bill. I have listened to the opposition and to the arguments surrounding e-cigarettes, and it's my understanding that the banning of e-cigarettes only applies to those under the age of 19. So I am not sure

why the opposition would be opposed to that and would want us to encourage our young people to smoke before age 19.

I personally support this bill. The opposition parties have needlessly extended debate on Bill 45, and over 73 members of the Legislature have either spoken to this bill or participated in this debate during questions and comments. We have extended debate beyond the 6.5-hour threshold so more members could have an opportunity to speak to the bill.

Listening to the debate, it's clear that the majority of members support this bill. It has been seven years since the member from Nickel Belt has introduced this bill, so I am not sure why we are not getting down to business and passing this bill. It's time to end debate on this bill. Continuing debate tonight signals that there is no true desire to have further meaningful debate on this bill, and the opposition's goal is only to delay the passage of this bill. They have claimed that this bill is so important to them, so I am not quite sure why they would want to delay the passage of such an important bill.

This bill is important to me and it's important to the members on this side of the House because all of us have had experiences that this bill addresses. Let's pass this bill without further delay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Windsor West can now reply.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I certainly appreciate the comments from everybody in the chamber. But, you know, I think it's shameful that when the member from Niagara got up and talked about Kraft Dinner and how many can't afford anything but Kraft Dinner, that the government's side bursts out laughing and yells out, "Come on." Maybe they might be out of touch with what's going on in Ontario, because I can tell you that in my riding, there are many people who struggle to make ends meet, and Kraft Dinner—they're lucky to be able to afford to eat mac and cheese every night; they often go without meals. So I think it's shameful that the government side thinks it's funny that there are people in this province who are struggling.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Keep playing games.

2240

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's not playing games. You seem to think it's funny that there are those with—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I'm going to give her more time to finish her remarks, but I would ask the government side to please come to order and allow her to respond to the comments.

The member for Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker.

The member from Durham stood up and talked about those of us on this side who wish to speak and share stories about our ridings and concerns—for instance, the amendments that came from our side, from our constituents, that were shot down—that somehow that's us needlessly dragging out debate. I think that in itself is in-

sulting to the people who have elected us to be here. I felt it was very important to stand up and share the concerns of my constituents, and those were concerns around the 17 items that we brought forward as amendments; they shot down 16 of them.

While the government side said they're working really hard, for them to then stand up and say, "We're working really hard but we've had enough for tonight. We don't want to hear from you anymore," is a pretty sad case.

I appreciate you giving me extra time, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Thank you—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I know.

I'm pleased to rise on Bill 45. As I was thinking about this bill, I was reminded of the show *Mad Men*. Hopefully there are some *Mad Men* fans. Deb and I loved watching that show on Sunday nights; I'm sad it's off the air. One of those classic shows, too, that actually wrote its own ending. *Mad Men*, of course, capturing the era from about—

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I haven't watched it yet.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Then you'd better leave the Legislature and not read Hansard. I'm going to give you a spoiler. You've got your chance now.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I'm out, I'm out.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** What did it cover? The period 1963 or so to, I think, about 1975, which in many ways wasn't that long ago; certainly in the lifetimes of many of us here. I was born in that span myself.

But when you watch the show and some of those scenes that a lot of us remember actually living through, it seems like a long, long time ago in reality, the way social norms have changed, one of which is smoking. You probably remember in *Mad Men* almost every character smokes at some point on the show, and one of the ironies—and I'm glad that the House leader left the Legislature—was that Betty Draper, Don Draper's wife, dies of lung cancer.

There was a scene early on in *Mad Men* where she's smoking a cigarette and her doctor is examining her, and the doctor is smoking during the medical examination. It kind of makes you laugh now, but that was the reality not too many years ago. So I think as a whole, in Canada and in North America, we've made tremendous progress in fighting back against smoking. You don't see that scene anymore—far from it. It tells you how far we've come.

The main point in my remarks today on Bill 45: I'm going to focus almost exclusively on contraband. If I have some time, I'll get to the caloric labelling. Here's the point I want to make: You don't see that today any more, but we've stalled. Despite all that progress within my lifetime, these numbers of decades, we've stalled. Right around 2006 to 2008, the overall rate of smoking in the province of Ontario has been stubbornly stuck at 18% of the population, roughly one in five—

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** No improvement.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** No improvement. It's about 2.1 million residents since 2008.



Every year, like clockwork, the government brings forward legislation, usually in a budget bill, to fight contraband tobacco or to encourage healthier habits when it comes to smoking but, respectfully, it hasn't worked. We've been stalled since 2008. No doubt there are a lot of feel-good measures like those in Bill 45 today, but as for their effectiveness? Judge for yourselves: flat-lined since 2008.

I'll use my time on Bill 45 today to talk about some bigger and bolder ideas that I won't have a chance to implement directly—maybe as part of a future government, I may. But that's still three years down the road.

I want to encourage my colleagues, in all sincerity, to take this on, to think bigger, to think bolder about actually fighting smoking.

Contraband tobacco is about 33% of smoking activity in the province today, and in some areas higher, up to 50%.

I'd love to see an Ontario that's number one when it comes to job creation. I'd like to see an Ontario that's number one when it comes to family income. I'd like to see a number one in terms of the quality of health care or the availability of life-saving pharmaceutical products. I don't want to see an Ontario that's number one in contraband tobacco use. We're number one. In fact, many will argue that we are the worst of any advanced economy in the Western world.

Conversely, BC is about 17.2%; Saskatchewan, 10.8%; Manitoba, 14.7%. Ontario is number one, the worst. Despite all the legislation, despite all the paper you're bringing forward, you've not shown the backbone to actually take this on, and I'm going to encourage you to do so.

Do you know where else we've stalled badly? For young people taking up smoking, young men, young women, ages 15 to 19, we made some progress—in 2000 with 25%, down to 15% in 2006—and then it stalled. The proportion of daily smokers between grades 10 and 12 actually jumped slightly in the 2008-09 school year from the year before and then flatlined. That prevalence varies by province, from PEI to BC, but, again, who has the worst incidence of young people smoking in Canada? It's the province of Ontario.

Why is it that Ontario has the highest level of young smokers of anywhere in Canada? Because it's cheap and because your drug dealer doesn't ask you for ID. I know that's strong language, but isn't that really the case? If you walk out of your high school parking lot and go a few steps down the street and buy it off the guy selling it out of the trunk of his car—isn't he really just a drug dealer?

If you feel so strongly about fighting against tobacco, why don't you recognize those illegal dealers for what they are? They're drug dealers. They're taking advantage of our youth and getting them hooked on a deadly product.

The University of Toronto found that 43% of cigarettes consumed by teenage smokers in Ontario were contraband, up from 25% in a 2006-07 Canadian youth smoking survey.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health—I think we all have a lot of regard for their work and the quality of studies they do—flagged the easy accessibility of contraband tobacco as a major reason for Ontario's stubbornly high teen smoking rate.

The sales of contraband tobacco contribute significantly—and hold our youth smoking rates way too high, way too long, because drug dealers don't check your ID. They take your cash, give the illegal cigarettes to you and ask to meet your friends.

It's not harmless, either. This is not a harmless activity. The contraband trade actually opens up trade routes for not only tobacco, drugs, human smuggling, firearms and weapons, but it is controlled by some of the most notorious gangs we have in North America. If you treat it like a slap on the wrist, the wrist gets better and they come back for more. But if you treat it like the true criminal activity it is, then and only then will you actually make a dent and lower those smoking rates among youth and the population as a whole. The drug dealers, the illegal cigarette dealers, those who smuggle, those who manufacture, have nothing to worry about. It's low-risk and high-reward. That's why they're all getting into the business.

These good-natured initiatives are nice to talk about, but they're not effective, so I ask my colleagues across the floor, with all due respect, to think big, be bold and actually make a big difference.

Step one: Speaker, if it's working next door, let's try it here. The province of Quebec passed Bill 59 in 2009 to crack down on the illegal cigarette trade in the province of Quebec. It brought contraband levels down from 40% in 2008 to 15% today—a greater than 50% improvement in the illegal trade.

2250

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Where's Ontario?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Worst. We're the worst. We're at the top of the list. Quebec now has improved dramatically, because they cracked down and they took it seriously and did something about it. They gave police greater authority to investigate, to seize and restrict cigarette-manufacturing equipment and vehicles. Local police have been given the authority to investigate contraband tobacco offences and are provided with the financial resources to actually do so.

In municipalities, municipal police forces are allowed to keep proceeds from the fines. They've got some skin in the game. They take it seriously. They get rewarded for their efforts in helping to cease smoking and keeping the proceeds—more than half, Speaker. Let me reinforce that point.

Last spring, there was a massive bust in Montreal that had 28 arrests and seizures of 40,000 kilograms of tobacco diverted from farms all across North America. Sadly, farms in the Tillsonburg area were part of that. They seized a car. So if you're selling illegal tobacco out of the trunk of your car—you're smuggling it off-reserve and selling it to the general population—and you take away the car, I've got to think that's going to make a difference. Seize the vehicle.

Ontario, on the other hand—there have been promises, but not much action. In 2012, the Ministry of Finance took responsibility for licensing tobacco growers to control the production and distribution of raw leaf tobacco to make sure the supply of tobacco stays legal. So it sounds promising. I remember the debate at the time.

Then the Ministry of Finance got cold feet. They stalled. They announced a temporary grace period that continues to this day. The result: We see farmers across our province who are under-representing their yields and selling overages to the black market for up to a 400% markup.

I'm worried, too, that if you simply ban menthol cigarettes in the legal economy, that product is going to gravitate to the illegal economy. Before we make more changes on the legal side, shut down the illegal market. If you can buy a product from the store safely and cheaply across the street that they don't have on your side of the street, you're going to cross the street and do that. Too many smokers do.

I think, before we bring in more of these measures, that's going to—do you know who benefits, who would really support this legislation? The Korean and Russian gangs, the Hells Angels, lawbreakers: They like that because they're going to get more business.

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** Follow the money.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk says, "Follow the money."

Before you do this, crack down on illegal trade. I talked about one of those ways already.

Step two: If it's a criminal act, treat it that way: serious punishments for the crime. If it's a drug-dealer system, treat it like a drug-dealer system. Right now in communities across this province large and small, it leads to threats to public health, corruption of legitimate businesses and corruption of farmers. It funds organized crime in extremely dangerous ways. The RCMP estimates that 175 criminal gangs use it to fund other illegal activities, including guns, drugs and human smuggling.

There are over 300 smoke shacks that illegally sell contraband in the province of Ontario. Police report a minimum of 50 illegal cigarette factories. So they're breaking the law. If they're selling this dangerous toxic substance to our kids, why don't you shut them down? You wouldn't tolerate a meth lab in your neighbourhood selling drugs to kids. You wouldn't tolerate a marijuana grow-up in your neighbourhood. So why do you look the other way when it comes to illegal smoke shacks in the province?

If you bulldoze the meth labs, bulldoze the illegal smoke shacks, shut them down and put them out of business, lock up the illegal factories—those that have permits are given very special permission around a significantly controlled and dangerous substance in our province. If they abuse that privilege, shut them down. Take it seriously. Act. If you want to make a difference, you strangle the supply.

Number three: Build a grand bargain with First Nations in our province. In the Constitution and in treaty

rights, First Nations have special circumstances—and the minister is here listening tonight, which I appreciate—when it comes to tobacco. This is long-standing. It's a special right and a special privilege. I just can't believe that that young man living on-reserve is going to have a greater economic opportunity in life when neighbours are involved in the black market cigarette trade, when they see the presence of Hells Angels on-reserve buying the product and moving it forward. Who's going to invest in this kind of community with illegal manufacturing operations and gangs hanging around? Who's going to give that young woman a good job on-reserve and invest in a legitimate business when this crime goes un-addressed? You're condemning another generation of First Nations young people in these particular communities to a life of poverty and lack of opportunities on-reserve because you won't shut down the crime.

How do you do that? A grand bargain with the First Nations. Give them a share of the revenue. One of the ideas we had in our plan was to share with host municipalities and First Nations the mining tax for new mines in the province of Ontario. Give them a bit of skin in the game and reward those communities that are near those deposits.

If they're selling tobacco, you want to encourage them to be legal, within the agreements. Share the revenues. Have those revenues dedicated to local infrastructure projects—a rec centre, education, whatever are the priorities in that host First Nation. But why don't you give them a share of the revenue? Then you incent good behaviour as opposed to rewarding bad behaviour. Make that grand bargain with the chiefs. Similarly, arm First Nations police with the ability to crack down on these operations and share in the proceeds of stopping this crime.

I think my that colleague from Haldimand-Norfolk would know better, but the amount of tobacco that is given to the aboriginal population under the quota system just isn't fitting with reality. If you reallocated tobacco sold on Ontario reserves per person for legal use, status First Nations smokers would need to consume between 32 and 70 cigarettes a day. Do you think that's actually happening? If it was, do you want to encourage that? I say to my friend the minister that I think part of that grand bargain is looking at that quota system and lowering the number of cigarettes that are in the system. But give them a share of the tax revenue. Help them participate in that structure. Ensure that the revenues go into improving infrastructure to create better economic opportunity on First Nations.

Step four: Interrupt the supply chain. You've got to act as if you're actually fighting drugs in the system, not simply combatting an irritating vice. Control the sale of certain materials necessary in tobacco manufacture: cigarette papers, cellulose acetate tow. Make sure that manufacturers only sell enough to supply the legal market, not the illegal one. Some 80% of acetate tow is used on cigarettes, and there is no viable alternative now. So, control the pieces that go into supply of the system,



require suppliers to submit regular reports about their shipments, have the Ministry of Finance investigate working environments—enforce these provisions. If this is a controlled substance that you're actually serious about eventually eliminating in the province, strangle the supply chain. Narrow it down.

You know the other arguments; my colleagues have made them well: We lose up to \$1 billion in foregone revenue as a result of this; we reward criminal activity and punish law-abiding citizens.

I was moved by comments in *Today Commercial News*, a local Chinese newspaper. Mr. Cheung a convenience store operator in Unionville-Markham expressed the impact of Bill 45 on his business. He said, "When my customers buy cigarettes from my store, they also buy snacks and drinks. In my estimation, this ban will make me lose more than 10% of business. At the same time, I also think the law is very unfair to discriminate against one group of smokers."

If smoking is legal but restricted, wouldn't you rather give the business to Mr. Cheung instead of criminal gangs like Hells Angels?

**Interjection:** I think so.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I think so, too. Why don't you?

So go big, go bold, treat it like the drug that it is and not just a nuisance. Make a grand bargain with First Nations leadership, provide incentives the right way and reward it. Give police greater authority. Lock up the criminals and bulldoze under the cigarette equivalent of meth labs. They haven't tried it yet. They've been stalled for eight years. I always felt if your trying isn't working, you've got to try something different.

2300

It has been done elsewhere. These are tactics we use to attack illicit drugs. If you truly want to get smoking levels lower than where they're stalled in the province of Ontario, if you truly want to bring in more revenue to the provincial coffers to put towards helping people suffering from cancer fight back, to helping disabled children overcome their challenges and have an incredibly fulfilling life, with a billion dollars, you can go a long way. If you want to reward hard-working entrepreneurs, small business people like Mr. Cheung in Markham-Unionville, I don't think you've got a choice.

I know it's too late to put it in this bill today, but in the next bill going forward—the Minister of Finance is here, the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs—I think it makes a lot of sense. It would be groundbreaking. It would make a hell of a difference.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** It was a pleasure listening to the last speaker. When he first started, he certainly took me back. I can remember, in 1983, working in a hospital. I was on the spinal cord injury unit, and a lot of the young people who had broken their neck or back were smokers.

I remember lighting up cigarettes on my shift in the hospital to give to clients in bed who were paralyzed and could not smoke on their own. I remember our occupa-

tional therapy department putting all sorts of different apparatuses together so that the people with fresh spinal cord injuries could continue to smoke in their hospital beds. In every room, you would go in to see a patient in bed, and all around the beds there were burn marks on the floor because patients would drop their cigarettes and then couldn't get out of bed, and the thing would just burn there, right on the ground. I see some nurses on the other side who I'm sure have experienced the same thing.

You wouldn't even dream of that right now. You wouldn't dream of a health care worker lighting up a cigarette for a client in bed. Things have changed. Things have to continue to change so we get to a point where we can continue to decrease this one in five Ontarians who still smoke—and in my riding, it's more like one in four Ontarians who still smoke.

The steps that we are taking with Bill 45 are not the end all of it all. They are tiny steps towards health promotion that can be done right here, right now, but a whole lot more needs to be done. Some ideas that he brought forward are certainly ideas that are worth looking at.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** I appreciate the comments made by the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook—very thought-provoking. I appreciate the member from Nickel Belt as well and, for that matter, all those who are fortunate tonight to be doing this night sitting.

Mr. Speaker, for those few watching at home, though, let's make no mistake: The opposition parties are needlessly extending debate on Bill 45 by continuing to put up speakers. The bill has now been debated for 16 hours at second and third readings combined. Over 75 members of the Legislature have either spoken to this bill or participated in the debate during questions and comments. The government has extended debate beyond the six-and-a-half-hour threshold so more members would have an opportunity to speak to this, but listening to the debate, it's clear that the majority of the members are, in fact, in support of the bill.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, it is time that the bill passes. It's time that the bill passes third reading and be proclaimed into law as soon as possible. Continuing debate further signals that there's no true desire to have a meaningful discussion on this bill. The opposition's only goal seems to be to delay.

I'm calling on the opposition party to stop stalling and help us move forward on this important piece of legislation so that we can continue to debate other important bills, such as Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act, or Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act, or Bill 37, Invasive Species Act; Bill 40, Agriculture Insurance Act; Bill 49, Ontario Immigration Act; Bill 52, Protection of Public Participation Act; Bill 66, Great Lakes Protection Act; Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act; Bill 80, marine mammals act; and Bill 100, Supporting Ontario's Trails Act.

Let's get to work on other things that are so important for this Legislature.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** I actually wish to comment on the presentation by the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook. He has indicated what I consider a big gap in the discussion. The discussion, as we know, has been going on for many, many bills, and a number of years.

He made reference to the elephant in the room. This piece of legislation does not address a major contributor primarily to young people smoking, and that is the very low price of tobacco. Why would a kid buy a carton of cigarettes and pay 80 bucks when he can pay 8? They make an economic decision, and as a result consumption increases. We know that there's no way the legal trade—and most of the discussion here discusses the legal trade—can compete with the illegal trade. When you're dealing with a very high-taxed product, those who pay zero taxes are not influenced at all, obviously, by the high tax process that we've seen over the last 12 years.

The member for Niagara West—Glanbrook made reference to Quebec. This is kind of embarrassing for those of us in the province of Ontario. They've reduced contraband tobacco. They did it through legislation. They were able to bring in legislation that actually reduced the rate of contraband tobacco by half. By doing that—and it may seem counterintuitive—they have increased their tobacco tax revenue. If that's what the Minister of Finance is concerned about, that's something to take a look at.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one more question or comment.

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I am pleased to rise on behalf of the people I represent in London West to respond to the comments from the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook.

I want to say the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook has certainly done a lot of work on this issue. He presented a very well-thought-out strategy that could begin to address the problems around contraband tobacco. I certainly agree that some of the ideas that he presented are worth taking a look at.

One of the phrases that he used in his presentation was about the need to—I think he said “starve the supply.” That is worthwhile, but what we also need to do is ensure that there are no new smokers being recruited by the appeal of flavoured tobacco. The measure that is proposed in Bill 45, the ban on flavoured tobacco, is critically important to prevent young people from starting to smoke, from getting hooked on the habit so they don't get into a situation where they might be willing to seek out Hells Angels or whoever because of their nicotine addiction and their need to continue smoking.

Yes, we do need to look at issues around contraband tobacco, but equally important, we need to move forward expeditiously on the measures that are included in Bill 45 to prevent new generations of young people from picking up the habit of smoking and all of the related health consequences that that involves.

2310

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That's it for questions and comments. I return to the member for Niagara West—Glanbrook for his reply.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I appreciate the comments from my colleagues here this evening. I just want to focus on one piece of what I talked about—and I do appreciate that some ministers particularly commented on aspects of the speech that they liked.

Look, we wouldn't tolerate a meth lab in a nice neighbourhood in Mississauga South. We wouldn't tolerate a marijuana grow-op in an upper-middle-class neighbourhood in Ottawa. So why do we look the other way when it comes to illegal cigarette manufacturers and retail operations on-reserve? Why the double standard? Why is it okay to look the other way at criminal activity that impacts First Nations' communities when you'd shut it down in non-First Nations' communities?

Think about this, too: How does that help out aspiring First Nations youth who want to get ahead, when the incentives are warped? When law-abiding chiefs want to make sure they better their communities and they see money that could go towards a local health project or a recreation project being funnelled to the pockets of the Hells Angels, how does it help First Nations move forward?

I know this is a significant restructuring of the way it works. A lot of revenue comes in from tobacco. I'd much rather see it go into our provincial coffers to support health care or education or helping those with disabilities, and part of that being shared with First Nations for good projects on-reserve rather than into the pockets of criminals.

Look, you already share revenue from gaming with First Nations. That began under the NDP government with Casino Rama. It continues today under your government. I hope that you'll follow through on something we've championed, which is sharing resource revenues, starting with mines, with host First Nations. Why not, too, when it comes to tobacco tax?

I believe in incentives; it's the way I think. I'd much rather see policy, when it comes to fighting contraband, that rewards good behaviour and punishes bad. Put the criminals behind bars, shut down the illegal operators and forge a grand bargain with First Nations leadership that's going to help invest in their communities and support law-abiding citizens.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House and hopefully represent the views of the good people of Timiskaming—Cochrane, even at this late hour. Just for the record, I believe, except for a few comments in questions and comments, this is my first opportunity to speak at length to this bill.

Again, this bill is a bit of a grab bag of bills largely based on bills put forward in this Legislature by the member from Nickel Belt.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** So why don't you just pass it?



**Mr. John Vanthof:** I think members who want to speak to this bill deserve the chance and I think all members could add something. The member we just heard speaking, from Niagara West—Glanbrook—I think those were comments that were definitely worth hearing and I think that's one of the reasons that we need to debate this bill.

With this bill there are three main parts, and I'd like to start with the explanatory notes of the first part before I put my views forward. This is annexe 1: Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus.

« Les propriétaires et les exploitants de lieux de restauration réglementés sont tenus d'afficher le nombre de calories de chaque aliment normalisé qui y est vendu ainsi que tout autre renseignement qu'exigent les règlements.

« Le terme "lieux de restauration réglementés" désigne les lieux de restauration qui vendent des repas pour consommation immédiate et qui font partie d'une chaîne de 20 lieux de restauration ou plus en Ontario ou qui sont assujettis à la présente loi par l'effet des règlements.

« Des pouvoirs d'inspection et des peines sont prévus.

« Le lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil se voit accorder des pouvoirs réglementaires, notamment pour prévoir des exemptions. »

Basically, that's forcing restaurant chains to post calories. That's a good thing. You know what? That's a good thing.

What has come up several times in this debate is that there should be other things posted, and one of them is sodium. The member from Nickel Belt had a little quiz on how much sodium was in each product in many restaurant chains, and I'm sure many of the members here were surprised. I almost felt like giving up salad—not that I'm a big salad consumer. Then it was explained to me that it was the salad dressing, not the leafy stuff. But it was eye-opening.

One of the members on the government side said, "We're thinking about it, and it needs some more time." I'm not sure if it needs more time, because the restaurant chains are very well aware of the issue and some of them, particularly, are quite quick to use food claims to their benefit. You will see some restaurant chains advertising hormone-free beef, much to the chagrin of many Canadian cattle farmers. So a chain like that shouldn't have any issue with advertising how much sodium is in their products. They could use it as a marketing tool. But the government seems very reluctant to force that.

I was watching the faces of many of the members as the member from Nickel Belt was telling us, many for the first time—certainly me for the first time—about how much sodium was in each product. We were shocked. People would also be shocked if those numbers were on the menu boards. That's why they're not there. But they should be.

I appreciate one of the comments from the member from Leeds—Grenville. He said, "You cannot regulate health." But you certainly can make people aware. By

listing calories on your menu board, you're making people aware; by listing sodium on a menu board, you are making people aware. There is no reason that we can fathom why the government wouldn't add that, based on the numbers that the member from Nickel Belt gave us—and those numbers are available but, obviously, not readily available.

Another member—I can't remember which member—said, "We should have a health check, a star." Even if you were below a sodium level so that you got a low sodium rating, it wouldn't be that big a stretch. It would be a great start. It could easily be put into a bill like this, because if a restaurant chain can advertise hormone-free beef, they certainly shouldn't have a problem saying "low sodium."

**Mme France Gélinas:** Where does the hormone-free beef come from?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Most of it does not come from Canada because it's hard to prove that in Canada. Actually, if you look, there are a lot more natural hormones in the beef than ever is added. But it's a marketing ploy.

There's no reason why you couldn't put sodium as—while you're doing it, there's no reason why you couldn't do it as well as possible. It takes a long time for these bills to go forward, and the government is now saying that people are wasting their time. I don't believe that in standing here I'm wasting my time for the people of Timiskaming—Cochrane; neither was the member from Leeds—Grenville or the member from Nickel Belt. We are adding to this debate because these debates don't happen a lot. When we're doing it, we should put on the record what should be done.

The second part of this bill, Bill 45, is the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Again, I'm going to read the second explanatory note. This is annexe 2: Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

« Diverses modifications sont apportées à la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée, dont les suivantes :

« 1. La vente d'articles promotionnels joints à des produits du tabac est interdite.

« 2. La vente de produits du tabac aromatisés est interdite, sous réserve du nouveau pouvoir de prescrire des exemptions.

« 3. La liste des endroits dans lesquels un inspecteur est expressément habilité à pénétrer est élargie.

« 4. Des modifications sont apportées aux dispositions relatives aux pénalités et aux interdictions.

« 5. Le pouvoir de prescrire des endroits pour l'application de la loi est modifié afin de prévoir des exemptions. »

This is, again, based on a bill from the member from Nickel Belt. It's basically banning flavoured tobacco. That's basically what it's doing.

**2320**

There has been a vigorous debate here about whether menthol should be included right away, shouldn't be included, and also a good debate about whether doing this by itself is enough. It has been a good debate, and I think we would all agree this is a good start. It has been a

long time coming. Menthol could have been put in right away but, again, the government is going to have to seriously look at contraband tobacco.

My daughter was a waitress in a restaurant that had a corner store, and they sold tobacco there. My daughter was caught and fined by the tobacco police. There was a line of 20 people. She didn't ask the one person if he was of age, and that was the end—and more power to them. They go through all this hassle, and a few miles down the road, anybody can go in and buy at will, and there are no guards on the—you know, our tobacco has to be hidden. I'm not against that, but you have to go the rest of the way because, again, regulations—I talked a lot about this this afternoon. Regulations are good, but you have to look at the whole package, because if you just look at half the package—and this is a good part of the package, but we're going to have to go steps further and not just for the health aspect, but for the tax aspect, for the criminality aspect. You can't go halfway on this one. We all recognize that. Is that a reason to not put this through? Of course not. But this forms the base of doing the next step. I fully agree with the comments from—I keep forgetting what your riding is.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Hudak.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Mr. Hudak.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I give him permission, Speaker.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** But we need to take this step by step, and we need to take that to the next step because it's the same across the province. We are taking corner stores that are selling a legal product and we're putting them through hoops, which I agree with, but right next door we are just driving by and acting like it doesn't exist. That is a huge problem, and that is a problem that is well worth talking about at 11:30 at night because it's a huge problem across the province. I am certainly happy and proud that I've actually had the opportunity to talk about that.

The third issue—I'll just find my explanatory notes again. I'll spare the people; I'm just going to do this in English.

*Interjections.*

**M. John Vanthof:** OK. Je vais faire la troisième en français. La troisième annexe, c'est la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques.

« La vente et l'utilisation de cigarettes électroniques sont assujetties à des restrictions. »

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** If you're not careful, I'll do it in Dutch.

« Par exemple :

« 1. La vente et la fourniture de cigarettes électroniques aux personnes de moins de 19 ans sont interdites.

« 2. L'étalage et la promotion de cigarettes électroniques sont assujettis à des restrictions.

« 3. La vente de cigarettes électroniques dans certains endroits et lieux est interdite.

« 4. Des dispositions sont prises pour réglementer, d'une part, l'emballage des cigarettes électroniques et,

d'autre part, la vente des cigarettes électroniques aromatisées.

« 5. L'utilisation de cigarettes électroniques est interdite dans les lieux de travail clos, les lieux publics clos et certains autres endroits ou lieux.

« Le projet de loi prévoit des pouvoirs d'inspection et de réglementation, ainsi que des infractions. »

I think we've had a really good discussion about electronic cigarettes here. A lot of issues have been brought forward about how people are using electronic cigarettes to try and stop them from smoking. That's a good thing. The issue, I think, from our point of view is that if we allow electronic cigarettes to be used in places where regular cigarettes are prohibited, once again the marketing of electronic cigarettes will go far beyond people who were trying to stop smoking. That's the issue, right? No one is trying to prohibit people who use it as a tool to stop smoking. That's not the issue here.

The government, which we support, is not trying to prohibit the sale of electronic cigarettes. It's regulating the sale of electronic cigarettes, and that is a whole different issue. It's almost the same, to a lesser degree—if you look at the cigarette issue with illegal cigarettes, illegal cigarettes, because of a lack of willpower from the government, are regulated differently—or unregulated—than legal cigarettes. The same risk would happen with e-cigarettes if they continued to be not regulated, because a lot of the vapour cartridges—I'm sure some of them are safe, but many of them aren't tested, so we don't really know. And if these are used as a way to introduce people to smoking, that's the concern.

Again, it's a very good debate here this evening, I think a worthwhile debate, because both sides have put their case forward. That's the idea of having a Parliament. I get quite distressed sometimes when people say, "We've debated this enough." We make laws in this place—at least, we're supposed to. I've sat here all night—I've sat here all day, actually—but I don't find that tonight, and perhaps the members on the government side would disagree with me, was a waste of any of our time. I don't find that tonight was a waste of any of our time. I'm sure the government side would disagree. We heard good remarks from the members from this side. We heard good questions and comments from some of the government members.

2330

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm not going to be too complimentary. I'm fairly even-handed, but I don't want to be too complimentary.

This is a good bill. It could be a better bill. It has been a long time coming. But it is, as all laws are, a law that's going to impact people, and some of the side impacts are going to make some people's lives harder. That's something that has to be recognized.

One other thing: I really like the part that only chains have to list their calories and their sodium. I've got to put a plug in for the chip stands in Sturgeon Falls, which



have the best poutine, certainly in my riding—and I hope they don't put the calories.

One other plug I'm going to put in is for Webers hamburgers on—is that on 11 or is that on 400 still?

**Interjection:** It's 11.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** On 11—because they use Thornloe cheese. Thornloe cheese is made in my riding from 100% Canadian milk. Like a lot of other cheese in Ontario, it's made in Ontario with Ontario milk, and that's great.

I'd like to end on a very serious note. There are a lot of people in my riding and across the province who don't have the luxury of being able to afford burgers at Webers or poutine at Sturgeon Falls chip stands. There are people in my riding who subsist on mac and cheese. I like mac and cheese too. But they don't have a choice. I think that's something we all have to take very seriously.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Grant Crack:** It's an honour and a pleasure for me to get up and speak here this evening and make reference to the comments made by my good friend, mon ami de Timiskaming—Cochrane. Il a fait un très, très bon travail ce soir. I want to just confirm what he said. He said that it was not a waste of time to be here tonight. I completely agree with him.

As a matter of fact, Speaker, I'm glad we're here, because what it does is it shows the difference between the Liberal government and the members of the opposition. We spent two and a half years trying to put good pieces of legislation forward, with very little success, so tonight we're here making sure that we can put a number of measures that this government has put forward and the Minister of Finance had talked about—I think there are nine of them there, one of them being Bill 31. The entire House supports Bill 31. In Bill 31, we talk about ORVs, off-road vehicles. We talk about trying to get off-road vehicles more leeway in utilizing roads. What they're doing is they're delaying again, like they did for two and a half years. The people of Ontario will judge. There will be a day of reckoning again in the future. They went from 36 members down to 28. They went from 21 to 20.

Mr. Speaker, we are putting forward good pieces of legislation. I can tell you that this is a good piece of legislation. I was the chair of the committee that oversaw that. We heard all kinds of debate and very, very few amendments to this bill. They want to talk about it, they want to talk about it, they want to talk about it—they want to delay it. But we have almost a dozen pieces of legislation that we are going to put forward before the end of this session, because it's in the best interests of all Ontarians. I'm proud to be on this side of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** It's always a pleasure to bring comment to my colleague from Timiskaming—Cochrane. I think he started, early in his talk, asking a question: Is doing this, by itself, enough? And I would suggest to

you, no. As I said earlier in my comments, there are certain aspects of this bill that we support. The Healthy Menu Choices Act, the Smoke-Free Ontario Act—generally, those breeze right through here. The third part, the third schedule, the Electronic Cigarettes Act, is where we have a concern.

I'm not certain whether he touched on it, but in tonight's discussion what we talked about was the reality of punishing legal vendors of legal cigarettes that actually are licensed and okay in Ontario. We're actually going after them and hurting them. The convenience store owners haven't been talked about a lot here tonight, but they have been somewhat. At the end of the day they're doing the right things, and we're actually punishing them, and they're going to be challenged. We're going to lose taxes. That money could be going to things like health care, schools and special needs, yet we're actually rewarding illegal, contraband smoke shacks.

Not one word in this legislation addresses contraband. Again, it's been talked about almost ad nauseam here tonight, but there's nothing in this legislation—nothing in 12 years of this government—to even address that issue, Mr. Speaker. We want to ensure that youth are not smoking. Everyone in this House agrees with that. There's the biggest gateway; that was a term that was used in committee for three and a half days. The gateway to youth smoking is contraband—and not one word in this act to even talk about that.

We talk about making youth smoking illegal. I believe the ability to buy, possess or sell cigarettes by underage youth should be legislated so that it is illegal, similar to alcohol. It works. It's a deterrent. Again, nothing in this legislation. We certainly asked for that. We put it out in front. We had 39 different amendments for this bill. Not one of them was even really discussed. None of them were accepted. Sadly, they again say, "We know. You listen," and they move on.

We hope this legislation will help Ontarians, but it certainly is a far cry from what the best legislation could be.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's a pleasure to comment on the remarks made by my colleague from Timiskaming—Cochrane. Generally speaking, Speaker, after 10 o'clock at night I find that the quality of legislative debate in all kinds of Legislatures begins to decline and degrade. But in fact, the member from Timiskaming—Cochrane was coherent in both languages, quite to my amazement. He spoke well about the need to actually provide people with information. He's quite right. If you say that your beef is hormone-free, which I have to say as an urban dweller is a good thing, you don't taste that. But salt is awfully yummy. Giving people the information they should have when they make a decision about what they're going to order makes tons of sense. I think he nailed it really well.

There are people who are talking about the health benefits of the food that they're selling, the meals that they're preparing and putting on the table. Clearly, they

should be advertising the fact that they're low sodium, low salt, good for your heart, good for your health.

I want also to say that he's quite correct in his comments about schedule 3 of the bill. This is a matter of regulating e-cigarettes; it's not a question of banning them.

Speaker, my time is running short, but I want to speak to comments made earlier by the member from Windsor West. She talked about the difficulty people are having getting food these days. I have to say, on a non-rhetorical basis, that in the last year, as I've talked to seniors in the seniors' buildings in my riding, for the first time I've heard people say, "We need price controls on food." That says to me that a lot of people are very hard pressed. I've been in political life for a few decades now. It's the first time I've heard a call for price control on food. This is a significant and real matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I rise once again to speak to this bill. I want to take a few minutes to speak about contraband. I have to say I'd like to congratulate the member from Niagara Falls for a very—he's not paying attention right now, but—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Hold it, hold it.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Niagara West—Glanbrook.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Niagara West, yes. I think he made some very thoughtful comments on the contraband issue.

I just wanted to say that I actually happen to agree with a lot of what he said, but it's not an either/or. Bill 45 moves forward not as an either/or. Because we are doing Bill 45 doesn't mean that we are not going to focus on contraband, or that focusing on contraband would somehow preclude the need to move forward with Bill 45. I think each has a place.

2340

I want to take a few seconds—well, I just have about a minute—to speak to what this government is doing on the contraband file. As many of you know, the Minister of Finance is here. On January 1 of this year, the Ministry of Finance took over the oversight of loose-leaf tobacco, of growing tobacco. That was a big move because it's about controlling tobacco leaf at the source. The budget very, very clearly lays out a number of action plans, including empowering the OPP to investigate the connection between organized crime and contraband. We are also looking at designating the Ministry of Finance's enforcement officers as peace officers so that they have more powers. We are looking at giving our enforcement officers the ability to, for instance, stop a vehicle that they suspect of carrying contraband or loose-leaf tobacco to inspect it. So there are a number of things that we're working on and, very important, working with the First Nations. The member from Niagara West talked about that, and absolutely, we need to work with the First Nations, and we look forward to doing that. It's an important issue, and this government recognizes that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** That's all the time we have for questions and comments for this round.

I return to the member for Timiskaming—Cochrane for his response.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I would like to thank the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, the member from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound, my colleague from Toronto—Danforth and the Associate Minister of Health for their comments.

First I would like to respond to the member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. He mentioned Bill 31 and specifically off-road vehicles. Actually, when you read Bill 31, it doesn't do what rural Ontario has been asking for all these years, because when Bill 31 is passed, side-by-sides will still not be able to go on the sides of secondary highways and on rural roads. You know what? You missed the mark.

We'd be happy to help you change the regulation. If you're going to really boast about how great the law is and you're going to mention specifically off-road vehicles, then you had better make sure that the regulation is correct, because that one isn't.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Let's debate it, then. Let's put this one to bed.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd be happy to. I'm sure, between the member from Parry Sound—Muskoka, who put forward a similar bill, and myself, we'd be happy to help you with the regulations.

I'd like to close with the comments from the member from Toronto—Danforth. In the four years that I've been MPP, the increase in people that we have coming into our office who don't know where to turn, particularly seniors on fixed incomes who have, in my area, the hydro bill eating up huge parts for heating their houses, and they don't know where to turn—it is a huge, huge issue, something that we have to pay more attention to.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I do have some prepared remarks, but I did want to add to a couple of comments that were made. If the minister was willing to work on these contraband cigarettes, that's something that I'd be willing to work on with my caucus to help you get it through the House. Let's do something about that, as the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook said. It's a scandal that this is going on in this province.

The member from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said that he's proud of all these bills and that we're going to get 12 more passed. Well, get ready to be here until midnight every night, because we're not going to just let you get them. Charles—I mean, the Minister of Finance—I hope you're able to be here every night, because we'll be here as well. We're going to make sure, if you want to get those bills, that anyone who wants to speak is going to get to speak.

**Interjection:** That's democracy.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** That's democracy. And also, from the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, it's a long road that doesn't have a curve in it, so don't get too smug. Don't get too arrogant because the people have seen through you guys by now.



Anyway, thank you, Speaker. I'm pleased to rise this evening to add my comments to the third reading debate on Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Yeah, all right. I might do that.

What he did say, too, the minister—a number of members have spoken about getting bills to the House. Well, I know a member that got a number of bills through this House in a minority situation, so it's not just government that can pass bills. Members, if you work together—and it's not just the government that has all the great ideas.

I see the Minister of Agriculture here. I want to thank him for working with me on that bill of mine under the Local Food Act, where we got a 25% tax credit to farmers for donating surplus food. So a number of those seniors that are in that situation—as a number of members have spoken about tonight—can access fresh food and fresh vegetables. Those were all ideas that didn't just come from government. They worked their way through committee, and we were able to adopt those.

We also had Ontario One Call act, which is making the infrastructure safer in this province. It's making contracting safer for people; that's the labour side of it. It also protects infrastructure and makes homeowners safer.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** That's because you listen, Bob.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I listen; that's right. The member from Sarnia-Lambton did listen, and I thank the House for helping me pass that as well.

I do want to get back to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. It's a combination of previous pieces of legislation. I'd like to deal with the healthy menu. I don't always subscribe to that, as you can tell. I'm going to leave this stuff alone.

Anyway, like I said, I quit smoking over 35 years ago. It was in 1980, and it was one of the best things I've ever done. I would encourage everyone to do it. If these smoking cessation objects—the vaporizers—work for people, I say let's let people still have access to those.

I've talked to people in nursing homes and long-term-care facilities. One lady's husband said, "My wife's beside herself because she thinks she's not going to be able to use this smoking device any more"—the vaporizer. She has given up cigarettes because she's in a long-term-care facility, and he said, "I don't know how I'm going to be able to live with her," when he goes to visit her. Maybe he won't go as often. I don't know. It might have something to do with that.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** Maybe he'll take her some chocolates.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** He'll have to take her some chocolates, the minister said.

In March 2010, the President of the United States signed legislation into law that required restaurants and similar retail food establishments with 20 or more locations to list their calorie content, and that's something this bill apparently does as well. Five years later, regulations have only just recently been set by the Food and Drug Administration in the United States. It seems it will be some time before they have the calorie count.

While I certainly believe that labelling menus with calorie counts so that consumers are better informed in the choices they make—I believe there is also a balance that must be struck so that not all of the burden of educating the consumer is on the business community. Consumers must also take some of the responsibility so they know what they're putting in their bodies.

Today, nutritional content for almost every fast food item in the marketplace is available online and is accessible through everyone's smartphone and various apps. The Associate Minister of Health cited her own example of googling a medium iced cappuccino at Tim Hortons and discovering it has up to 400 calories.

I do wonder if having that one statistic alone, calories, is enough for individuals to make those sound nutritional choices. At best, displaying calories can only serve as a nudge to consumers in their decision-making. Consumers in Ontario will still be purchasing beverages and meals at many restaurants and eateries that fall outside this government's legislation.

To get back to my own riding of Sarnia-Lambton in the town of Petrolia, the Hard Oil town, where I happen to live—I would recommend everyone in this chamber make a point of visiting that sometime over the summer or into the fall. There are five locations of the Coffee Lodge, which the Sarnia Observer wrote an article about.

"In a business where large chains dominate, the Coffee Lodge has found its niche and grown to become a Sarnia-Lambton phenomenon." Some of you in this House may know the owner of the Coffee Lodge, Leo Stathakis. He is the past president of the Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce and has participated many times in the Sarnia-Lambton Days that we have at Queen's Park. The most recent one—

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** That was great, Sarnia-Lambton Day.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** That's right. The most recent one was on March 11; the Minister of Agriculture was there that day.

I also attended Peterborough Day, which was also a success.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Glad to reciprocate.

Mr. Stathakis and the success of the Coffee Lodge are indicative of the many hundreds and thousands of entrepreneurs and restaurateurs around the province who have found success in the food service industry because of the quality of the food and product in this province—the food and the service by their employees.

2350

Restaurants like this don't operate with huge, multi-million-dollar front offices like a Tim Hortons or their parent company now, Burger King, would have at their disposal. Additional administrative requirements like requiring calorie counts could serve as a barrier to innovation and growth for small business if these requirements continue to be extended into the marketplace.

I hope the government will continue to consider that balance that is required to support both small business in

Ontario and help Ontario consumers make more informed nutritional choices.

The PC caucus proposed a number of amendments to schedule 1 of Bill 45 with the intent to make sure that the menu act does not become overly burdensome while still achieving the intention of the bill.

A quick reading of the bill, as reported to the House for third reading, shows that the government chose not to adopt the vast majority of those amendments. However, while I haven't reviewed the Hansard of all debate, I have no doubt that the vast majority of the debate dealt with those provisions of the legislation around the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and the Electronic Cigarettes Act.

To review, it would prohibit the sale of flavoured tobacco products while giving the minister the power to prescribe exemptions, along with a number of others. Further, schedule 3 of the Making Healthier Choices Act prohibits the sale and supply of electronic cigarettes to persons under 19 and places restrictions on the display and promotion. Also, it would allow for the regulating of packaging of electronic cigarettes and for regulating the sale of flavoured electronic cigarettes.

Since the introduction of Bill 45 on November 24, 2014, my constituency and Queen's Park offices have been inundated with emails from residents in Ontario who are not in support of Bill 45. There have been letters of support from many organizations like the Heart and Stroke Foundation and their director, Mark Holland, who wrote, "This legislative package will go a long way towards helping Ontarians live healthy lives free of heart disease and stroke."

But most of the emails sounded like the one from Lori Chevalier from Sarnia-Lambton, who wrote, "I am very concerned about what this bill will mean to me and so many others. As you probably know, I used to smoke and had done so for over four decades. I had tried quitting half a dozen times over the years and never made it to three months, regardless of what I did. Even nicotine replacement therapy patches and gum did not do the trick for me.

"This year I was determined to end my habit once and for all. The third week of January I started vaping using an e-cigarette with nicotine e-juice. This alone helped me cut down immensely the amount of cigarettes I was smoking per day. Within that first seven days I was down to only five cigarettes a day for the last couple of days I was smoking. Since January 24, I have been completely cigarette free! I am confident that I won't go back because the e-cigarette deals with the issues I had with quitting all those other times.

"When I look at Bill 45, schedule 3, my fear is that e-cigarettes and e-juice will become unavailable. Then what will happen to myself and so many others who prefer vaping versus smoking? I know, if that leaves me with nothing else to turn to other than those products I previously used before and failed with, chances are I will end up smoking again.

"Why are just e-cigarettes being targeted? If nicotine replacement is going to be attacked like this now, why

are all other forms of nicotine replacement therapies not being attacked as well?"

The letter goes on at great length—I won't read it all—but it's signed by Lori Chevalier; she's from my riding. She's quite concerned over this. She only represents just a few of the many constituents of mine who have written me on that point.

This afternoon, the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington told his own personal story about his family and his own children as well, and their repeated attempts to kick a smoking addiction, and only recently finding some degree of success, apparently, with e-cigarettes. As the member stated, the issue of smoking affects thousands of families in Ontario; the behaviour is generational and it is cultural.

In my riding of Sarnia-Lambton, the most recent statistic show that residents label themselves as daily or occasional smokers at a rate 6% higher than the provincial average.

The presence of smoking-related conditions like osteoarthritis, asthma, COPD and heart disease all present at higher rates in Lambton county than across the province. Provincially, statistics tell us that smoking claims nearly 13,000 lives in Ontario annually, yet people young and old continue with this habit each and every day.

I believe that there need to be a variety of options available to those smokers in Ontario who are looking to change their habits. Strong action should be taken to keep cigarettes and flavoured tobacco products out of the hands of people under the age of 19. There will still be far too many temptations in social settings to smoke, but, as legislators, we can do what we can to make sure that these adolescents do not have easy access to cigarettes and that they are not attracted to smoking because of deceptive, candy-flavoured tobacco products.

With adults, the challenge becomes greater. The ban on flavoured cigarettes, like menthol, may prove to drive many consumers to enter the contraband market, diverting income and oversight from the regulated distributors and businesses to sellers operating outside the law. Many will have connections to criminal operations and ties to drug trafficking, illegal guns and even human trafficking, as the member from Niagara West-Glanbrook spoke about earlier.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** It's getting late.

It is estimated, Mr. Speaker, that the black market in contraband tobacco costs Ontario and the federal government, as well as our provincial government, over \$1 billion every year in lost revenue. Think what that revenue would do, I say to the members of the House, for health care, for social improvements to programs we already have in place and many new ones. Governments like this are activists, and they've always got some new program that they want to start. Imagine what \$1 billion plus in revenue could do for that: \$1 billion would pay for 18,000 nurses, 24,000 long-term-care beds or provide home care to almost 72,000 patients. That's something I hear about in my office and I'm sure every member in



this House hears about every day. Let's think about what we could do with those dollars that we could generate. We could improve their health. We could drive a stake through the heart of organized crime.

Bill 45 was to combat tobacco use among youth. Contraband vendors are known to target youth, and yet Bill 45 does nothing to combat the contraband market in Ontario.

The member from Niagara West—Glanbrook came up with a number of good suggestions, and I think that the government should certainly seriously consider those, and we should look at—like I said, I know our party, and I'm sure the third party as well—if we could come up with something that would deal with this contraband tobacco use, I'm sure you would get speedy passage through the House, because it's something that we all know is a pox on all our houses, and we should do something about it, and I think we should work on that. Contraband vendors are known to target youth.

Finally, for users of e-cigarettes, while I would never encourage tobacco use—as I said, I quit myself 35 years ago—I do believe that for many, e-cigarettes have become a sort of salvation from the unbreakable grip of addiction. While the use of liquid tobacco and e-cigarettes may not be the end result that public agencies would like to see, I do believe that it is moving individuals in the right direction if they are moving away from the damaging effects of their previous smoking habit.

I will, at the end, be supporting Bill 45. However, I would hope—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I thought I'd leave that until the end.

However, I would hope this government would take time to empathize with the thousands of Ontario residents for whom e-cigarettes are the first step to breaking that

cycle and habit of smoking for good. Quitting smoking is one of the best decisions that people can make for their health. The Ontario PC caucus will always support them as they do so.

I see you looking at me, Mr. Speaker. Is my time coming to an end? Well, I'll just read a couple of other issues here.

How big is the issue of contraband tobacco?

"Canada, and Ontario in particular, have a contraband tobacco problem, one of the biggest in the world, and one that defies a neat solution. Nonetheless, something can, and must be done. Indeed, there are already positive signs. In a recent fiscal update, the Ontario government has signalled that it intends to get serious about contraband issues"—I'm not sure when this is dated.

"Tobacco, then, is not a third rail of provincial politics. If we reframe the issues and understand" that, we can do something about it.

"Illicit networks are necessarily difficult to study. However, estimates suggest that the Canadian contraband tobacco market is larger in proportion to its population than that of other Western countries. Estimates of the percentage of Canadian tobacco sold illegally range from 15% to 33%, with peaks as high as 50% in Ontario. Tax losses number in the billions of dollars. The general pattern suggests that contraband levels peaked around 2009, at a rate that almost rivalled the boom of the early 1990s. It seems the trend"—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** Am I—okay, I will wrap that up, Mr. Speaker. It's been a pleasure to rise and speak to this bill, and I look forward to further debate.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** It being Tuesday, this House stands adjourned until this morning at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 2400.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham–Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadi  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment / Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short





## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Monday 25 May 2015 / Lundi 25 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015, Bill 45, Ms. Damerla / Loi de 2015 pour des choix plus sains, projet de loi 45, Mme Damerla**

Mme France Gélinas .....	4513
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4520
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4520
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4521
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4521
Mme France Gélinas .....	4521
Mr. Randy Hillier .....	4522
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4524
Mme France Gélinas .....	4531
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4531
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	4532
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4532
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4532
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4533
Mr. John Fraser .....	4535
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4535
Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4536
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4536
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4536
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4539

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4539
Mr. Norm Miller .....	4540
Mme France Gélinas .....	4540
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4540
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4540
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4543
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4544
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4544
Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4544
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4545
Mr. Tim Hudak .....	4545
Mme France Gélinas .....	4548
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4548
Mr. Toby Barrett .....	4549
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4549
Mr. Tim Hudak .....	4549
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4549
Mr. Grant Crack .....	4552
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4552
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4552
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4553
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4553
Mr. Robert Bailey .....	4553
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4556

CAZON  
X1  
-023



No. 87A

N° 87A

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 26 May 2015**

**Mardi 26 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 26 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 26 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.  
*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2015 LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 25, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / *Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Good morning. I am pleased to rise in the Legislature and speak this morning on an important bill and on an important topic, and that today is Bill 45, the Making Healthier Choices Act.

My colleague from Nickel Belt has worked extensively and been a voice through the years on these issues, and it is satisfying to see much of her commitment and passion reflected in this legislation.

This is a solid bill, but it could have been stronger, and though the Liberals didn't commit to adopting amendments that would have strengthened this legislation, we hope they will still engage in the debate and work to include them in the future as we are talking about the health and wellness of our kids, families and communities.

Let's look at this bill. It's essentially three schedules. Schedule 1 enacts the Healthy Menu Choices Act. Schedule 2 includes amendments to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Schedule 3 enacts the Electronic Cigarettes Act.

We support Bill 45 to help protect the health of families and young people across our communities. We supported the 17 amendments that my colleague France Gélinas from Nickel Belt proposed, and we are disappointed that the Liberals ignored 16 of them. The government missed clear opportunities to not just make

healthier choices but to make a stronger healthier choices act.

Mr. Speaker, let's break this down, shall we? Schedule 1 enacts the Healthy Menu Choices Act, which will require calorie labelling for all food and drink items at food service premises with 20 or more locations in Ontario. Think of chain restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores and movie theatres. The basic point is that calorie labelling in chain restaurants can help families make informed decisions.

Let's look at the journey that this idea has taken. New Democrats have been pushing the government to take action on this issue for years. Our NDP health critic, France Gélinas, has been talking about this for a long time and has actually introduced at least 11 private member's bills on menu labelling and stricter tobacco control measures. I couldn't tell you why it hasn't been a government priority until now. In fact, they could have passed a bill requiring menu labelling six years ago when MPP Gélinas's Bill 156, Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, 2009, was introduced in March 2009 and would have required menu labelling in chain restaurants. However, despite the super slow process, it's good to see the Liberals finally recognize that these measures are the right thing to do.

In schedule 1, section 2, owners and operators are required to display the number of calories in each food or drink item, including combos, offered for sale, as well as any additional information required by regulations. The government says that this requirement will impact approximately 11,500 restaurant locations, 15 grocery store chains, 14 convenience store chains and two movie theatre chains in Ontario.

A few interesting thoughts go along with this: Why did the government stop short of making a healthier choice? Why didn't they include sodium labelling? MPP Gélinas proposed an amendment to mandate sodium labelling on menus, which makes sense considering the bill mandates calorie labelling. Many of the presenters at committee spoke about the need for sodium labelling, which clearly the Liberals don't agree with.

Something else that doesn't make a lick of sense: Section 5 renders municipal bylaws on caloric or nutritional information inoperative. Why are the Liberals removing the right of municipalities to create bylaws—at the discretion of the municipalities—regarding calorie and nutritional information for any food service premises, not just those with more than 20 locations in the province?

Here's another question: Why isn't the Liberal government requiring regulated food service premises to list



the recommended daily caloric intake for children, youth and adults on their menus and menu boards, as recommended by Ontario's Healthy Kids Panel and the Healthy Kids Strategy?

I'm struck every time the government decides it knows best rather than the experts or authorities from the field or the industry. I think it's ridiculous to ignore recommendations from those who are qualified to make them. Here we see more short-sighted examples. If we are mandating calorie labelling, then let's look at sodium labelling. If the government is decidedly refusing to take suggestions from the opposition parties, perhaps they could have at least committed to reviewing data and consulting on the topic as a way to make healthier choices, but alas.

Another proposed amendment was to establish a committee to review whether sodium information should be displayed and requiring that recommendations be received by January 1, 2017—another amendment that made sense: forward-thinking, healthful sense. But since it was put forward by someone from the opposition, this government put its head in the sand while shoving its fingers in its ears—just another day in the Liberal majority.

However, it isn't healthy to dwell on the negative, so we will discuss the importance of giving families more information. Families and people across the province have the right to know what they are consuming. Especially in this day and age of chemicals, carcinogens and toxic levels of sugar and sodium in our foods, every additional piece of information about what we are eating and feeding our families is helpful. People think they can judge what they are eating, but they have no way of knowing how something is prepared or the absurd amounts of additives. When we choose to eat at restaurants, we are trading healthful home cooking for convenience or experience. We shouldn't have to select menu items blindly, however.

According to the Ontario Medical Association, 82% of respondents support providing calorie information on fast-food menus to help tackle the increasing rate of childhood obesity. According to Toronto Public Health, at least 78% of survey respondents said they would use nutritional information "at least sometimes" if it were available, and a University of Toronto study found that 83% of Toronto consumers would like to see nutritional information when dining out.

However, even if you never read the menu to refer to calories, the industry has to stay competitive. It will make changes, and the average consumer will benefit. Positive changes will help everyone to benefit. Even if that individual never refers to the calorie information themselves, they will, over time, have healthier choices to choose from, as restaurants will modify their menus over time, just to stay competitive.

I would like to bring up something, however, as a caution when it comes to this government and quick fixes. Calorie information is important and recommended and, I would say, necessary for the public to make more

informed, healthful decisions. But it isn't the only piece to the puzzle. As my colleague from Nickel Belt has been pushing for, sodium is a damaging piece to the puzzle. If the government's lack of interest in broadening our health scope when it comes to other nutritional information is any indication, this is going to be a steep road to improvement ahead. But we shall endeavour anyway.

So let's talk about sugar. Sugar is toxic—full stop. I appreciate sugars as much as the next person, but I've learned along the way about different types of sugars, and, arguably more important, the glycemic index of foods. I'm not suggesting that the government start immediately labelling the glycemic index of all foods in restaurants, but I think it is important, if we're talking about health and unhealthy trends in our society, to start doing some real work in this area.

0910

We talk a lot about obesity, but we need to be talking about diabetes and the increasing number of childhood diabetics. The strain on our future health care system as more and more people are becoming diabetic is and will become immense. But let's just focus on the epidemic facing our children and our families. This government absolutely must take on sugar and glycemic awareness and find a way to educate our families—another issue, Mr. Speaker, that won't be solved by calorie labeling alone.

Again, we talk a lot about obesity, and there's a lot to talk about. I'm not minimizing the need to address that. But because often we don't see eating disorders when we look around, we don't address them. Calorie counting is one tool, but it isn't the cure-all. In fact, if this government at any point decides to teach calorie counting only in our schools, they would be doing significant harm. I would wager that students in intermediate grades and high school who are struggling with eating disorders at least rival the number struggling with obesity. Teaching children how to restrict calories without teaching them about proper nutrition, without teaching them about what is in their foods—vitamins, minerals, proteins, amino acids, healthy fats etc.—only gives them the tools to hurt and not to help. So we have to look at the whole picture when it comes to health, especially when it comes to our children. We have to look at their pressures, environments and realities, not just what we remember from our own.

To recap: Calorie labelling is appropriate and important as part of a strategy to encourage people to make healthier choices. The government should be including sodium, and eventually sugar, on its hit list. Especially when it comes to our children and a healthier future, the strategy should be a holistic one of education and information about the nutrient content of foods, not just calories. When it comes to our kids, it shouldn't be all about weight and waistline, it should be about health and wellness.

Health and wellness: Let's switch gears and look at schedule 2 of this bill. Schedule 2 includes amendments to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act which will prohibit the

sale of flavoured tobacco products while allowing the government to make exemptions by regulation. Unfortunately, the government has confirmed that menthol will be exempted from this ban for at least two years, which is quite unfortunate, but I'll come back to that.

Schedule 2 would prohibit the sale of promotional items with tobacco products, and increase the fines and penalties for individuals and corporations that contravene some sections of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Mr. Speaker, tougher restrictions on smoking, including a ban on flavoured tobacco products, will help discourage young people from smoking. So let's talk about smoking and our youth. I remember when my dad used to smoke. He used to say it was really, really easy to quit because he did it all the time, sometimes once a day. But I remember that it wasn't until mid-elementary school, when we had a really enthusiastic Stop Smoking campaign on at school—it might have been a Butt Out campaign or something along those lines. We watched a video and I understood that my dad was probably going to die, and I started to cry at school when I realized, being maybe in grade 2 or so.

When dad got home that night, we had a talk. A very pointed talk, I might add; you should imagine me in grade 2. And then I took his pack of cigarettes and floated them in the toilet. Looking back, my father was probably furious, but really what could he say? I don't know if that was his turning point, but it was mine. I was relentless after that. Then he started on nicotine gum as a cessation aid. I can still recognize the smell of nicotine gum on someone who's mid-quit, and I applaud anyone in that process. My father, 25 or 30 years later, now can't believe that he ever did anything so damaging, and, touch wood, he is still healthy.

Cigarettes, Mr. Speaker, if used the way that they are designed, if used the way that they are intended to be used, have a 50% mortality rate; so if used properly and smoked fully and regularly, 50% of users will die. That is astounding. So consider kids: It's estimated that 90,000 new kids will start smoking and become the next generation of smokers. So let's do the math: 45,000 are going to grow up and die because of smoking. We need to start protecting our children—not start; we need to continue protecting our children.

We all grew up seeing Joe Camel. He was cool. All the girl camels loved him. He rode motorcycles. He played pool. And he had at least a full-page ad in every teen magazine that I used to read. And I remember Virginia Slims. They had great ads for teenage girls, as I recall.

Well, when I was doing a Google search to see the current candy-flavoured, super-cute tobacco packages for kids, I came across a great Joe Camel ad. Only, it had been redone to be Joe Chemo. He wasn't on the beach anymore. He was walking with an IV pole through the halls of an overcrowded hospital full of other sickly Joe Chemos.

It would be interesting to do a "where are they now?" feature on the Marlboro Man, Joe Camel and Virginia

Slim. I'm pretty sure that we'd find they had all died slowly and wishing they had made healthier choices.

Who remembers Big League Chew shredded bubble gum?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** Love it.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Well, that was packaged and marketed like baseball players' chewing tobacco.

Who remembers Popeye cigarettes? I remember when they had the red tips on the ends and I remember when they were called Popeye cigarettes. Then I remember when they were rebranded and became Popeye candy sticks. They were all-white; there were no red tips. But we weren't fooled. They were still delicious and the best fake-smoking, pretend grown-up candy that there was.

I personally never liked the black licorice pipes, but there they were on the counter for 10 cents or 15 cents or whatever.

That was candy back then, designed to get us thinking and goal-setting about how we could grow up to smoke.

Let me tell you a bit about kids' candy today, which I've seen a lot of in our schools. Candy comes in really cute, bright containers. Candy comes in Push Pops with plastic twist-up tubes, and in reusable plastic cases, cans, boxes and bags. Candy now looks like cellphones, jewellery, iPods, lipstick and toys—the brighter, bolder and bigger packaging, the better.

Parents recognize a canister of Bubble Tape gum. Parents recognize hard candy Push Pops. Parents recognize a pack of gum. Parents recognize tear packs of random candy. But the problem is that parents don't recognize snuff, which is sold in candy colours and flavours like cherry pop in a little tube just like a Push Pop. Parents don't recognize chewing tobacco in a brightly coloured Bubble Tape canister. They don't recognize strawberry cigarillos in a gum package. They don't recognize tear packs of white grape-, peach-, sour apple-, coconut-, watermelon-, mango-, strawberry-, chocolate- or licorice-flavoured cigarillos.

Also, think of those little breath strips in the little plastic snap cases that you can tuck in your pocket or your purse. They sell dissolvable tobacco strips in the exact same packaging.

So are we better understanding the concern here?

Well, there's another concern. This government has given the industry two years to maximize their future casualties by giving them two years to maximize menthol targeting. Imagine the possibilities. Big Tobacco likely has their two-year mint line ready to go: chocolate mint, orange mint, strawberry mint, maybe even mojito mint. Why is this government giving Big Tobacco two years to get their hooks into our kids?

I would also like to challenge us to not only be vigilant but to be smart. When we ban flavoured cigarettes, they develop lines of cigarillos. If we ban tobacco, they'll pick some other random toxic plant to light on fire and sell to our communities. So let's pay attention, please. Big Tobacco is not going to give up the game or their profits just because we are passing a law. Big Tobacco and nicotine pushers are crafty. Enter e-cigarettes.



Schedule 3 enacts the Electronic Cigarettes Act, which will prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes to youth under age 19, prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes in certain places and restrict the display and promotion of e-cigarettes and prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in enclosed workplaces, enclosed public places and other locations where smoking is already prohibited.

I remember when people used to smoke in restaurants and bars. I remember thinking that having a smoking or non-smoking section in a restaurant was strange when the smoke just drifted over into the non-smoking section. I remember being out at nightclubs during university—not that often, though, Mr. Speaker; I see judgment there—choking on others' smoking. And then I remember coming back to school after the summer, when there was a new bylaw that smoking was prohibited inside. It was amazing. I could see my friends again. My clothes weren't disgusting. I wasn't chronically coughing throughout the semester.

Recently, I had a throwback moment when I was in a restaurant, sitting beside a friend of a friend, who was sucking on some strange contraption. She said it was vaping. I don't care if I get in trouble for saying this, but it was such a pretentious, ridiculous thing to see for the first time—and to see a grown-up pretending to be a sophisticated grown-up was really absurd. That's how I saw it. I recognize that others see it differently.

0920

Then I came to find out that this vaping wasn't regulated and that she and others don't even know what they're sucking into their lungs. It was like watching some kid you knew in school start smoking when the rest of us knew that it was a really bad idea. So here we have a whole new trend and a new audience—a novelty without the background information. We're hearing from those who don't want them banned because of their potential as a cessation aid. Okay, but they still need to be regulated. Also, making them light up or blink, making them flavoured and candy-coloured makes them enticing to kids, and that's not okay. I think most of us in this room hate seeing our children targeted by anyone who would do them harm. So I applaud regulation of this new trend. Kids don't need to be smoking or vaping or huffing or sniffing or snorting or anything else that involves them breathing something foreign into their precious, growing systems. Once our kids are better protected, I think that we can all breathe a sigh of relief.

To wrap this up, we support Bill 45. We wish the government would have supported the important amendments suggested to make it even stronger and better. We all want to see healthier and happier communities, and I hope that this bill is a step towards that ideal. Thank you again to my colleague from Nickel Belt for her tireless commitment to the best health for the most Ontarians. It is time that we prioritize health and wellness in a tangible, active way. I appreciate the time today to speak on this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Comments and questions?

**Ms. Sophie Kiwala:** It really is a delight for me to once again speak on this bill, and it gives me great pleasure since I had the opportunity to lead the bill through the process in committee. My colleague from Oshawa has encouraged us to pay attention, and I think that that's absolutely very wise advice. She says that with regard to menu labelling—as you know, this legislation is going to have menu labelling and a calorie count on menus and menu boards in restaurants with 20 or more facilities. But our member from Oshawa says that we're not going to be looking at the glycemic index right away, and that's absolutely correct. But I think that what we need to focus on in that comment is that this legislation is flexible and we will be able to make changes in regulation, and we will certainly look at the possibility of looking at sodium—salt—in the future.

The other thing that I wanted to point out is that the member opposite has said that menthol is exempt for at least two years, but it's not “at least” two years; it's “up to” two years. These are details that I think are extremely important, and again I would suggest that this is a very flexible and well-rounded bill that will certainly look at all of the options in the future.

We do need to do what we can to be supportive for Ontarians to have the best possible health. This is a bill that is very proactive, and I am looking forward to seeing it passing.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I did listen intently to the member from Oshawa's comments, and I applaud her for her efforts when she was just a child to come home and to speak to her dad. I think that it would be wonderful if parents felt comfortable speaking to their children about all of these life choices, because too often we just make too many assumptions.

I think that we have to also be cognizant of peoples' individual rights in the province. We want to attract tourists to our province, we want to be a hub of entertainment in the province, so we have to keep that in balance with the fact that we do have a publicly funded health care system. When people are smoking and drinking, and drinking and driving, this can result in expenses that the taxpayers have to incur. We have to find that right balance and the fact is that, as the member from Oshawa mentioned, industry always finds that wiggle space whenever we come out with new government regulations. So it's not really enough to just focus on the regulations. We have to focus on the public, on how to encourage all of our friends and neighbours and all of our constituents to enjoy life to the fullest while making healthy choices as much as possible, while also recognizing that people want to have some individual rights and people want to be enjoying the great outdoors, not necessarily as smokers, but the people who are experiencing the second-hand smoke—I think still, to this day, too many people find it hard to believe how irritating their smoking is to the non-smokers around them. So I applaud everybody who is joining in today on the discussion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further questions and comments? The member from—okay, you got in just in the nick of time. I recognize the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have to say I really enjoyed the speech and the comments from the member from Oshawa. I think one of the first things I have to do is also acknowledge the efforts of our member from Nickel Belt, who was integral in ensuring that this bill came forward through her years of advocacy around what I would call food literacy, in fact. That's going to be the topic of my minute and a half in terms of my comments.

What we need to encourage, broadly speaking, is that people need to be aware of what is in the food they eat. This could start absolutely in our education system with youth. The idea is that the more we know about what we're consuming in terms of the calories, the nutritional value, the more we can be aware of the impacts it will have on our health.

Looking at the health care system in Ontario and looking at the health care system in Canada, what we see is rising costs, and that's the trend. But that rising cost can be challenged because many of the illnesses that we suffer from are preventable. Prevention is an area that we haven't really put enough effort into. It's an area that will pay back in terms of return on investment in high, high value. It's something that we really need to focus on.

One of the areas of prevention is nutrition and how we eat and what we eat. The other area is how we can encourage people to be more active. While this bill is absolutely important, there are things that could have been improved. I loved the line that the member from Oshawa mentioned, that the government could have made a healthier choice by including more amendments that would have made this bill, this Making Healthier Choices Act, stronger. I would have loved to have seen some of those amendments.

In general, the next area of health prevention is encouraging physical activity. We need to look at strategies where we can encourage physical activity, make it easier, make it more accessible. Often we find that if we make the healthier choice the easier choice, more people will make that choice.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Mike Colle:** It's a great pleasure to make a comment on this very interesting bill, which is really a compilation of three or four bills, some brought by members on the other side.

Some people say, "You should have included sodium count." Some people say, "Include sugar count." Some people say, "Include a series of things." Gluten: A lot of people in Chatham-Kent, I'm sure, are worried about gluten nowadays. You hear everybody say, "The solution to everything: Eat quinoa and kale. You're safe: Eat quinoa and kale."

It's kind of difficult for people writing the legislation, the researchers and the people in the ministry, to try and

figure out: What is the optimal level of action we can take in this bill? In the bill—and I sat through many of the committee hearings—it's really wide-ranging. It ranges from control of e-cigarettes—not allowing it for young people under 18—and then you've got the calorie counts in restaurants. But it's an attempt by government to try and direct people's behaviour towards healthier outcomes. This is by no means a silver bullet, a perfect bill, because you can't control what people eat or how they behave totally. This is just an attempt.

As they say—Mr. Speaker, you'll be glad to hear this—sitting is the new smoking. So maybe we should do something to get people to stand more and not to sit so much, because the average Ontarian sits for eight hours a day and that contributes to obesity and poor health. We have to do something about sitting so much too. Thank you, and I'll sit down.

0930

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Oshawa for final comments.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I would like to thank my colleagues from Kingston and the Islands, Thornhill, Bramalea–Gore–Malton and Eglinton–Lawrence for their thoughtful comments this morning.

To further the comments made by the member from Kingston and the Islands, she corrected me and said that menthol is exempt for up to two years. Okay. But as she said, it's a flexible and well-rounded bill. I'm hoping that is something they opt not to enforce, that we don't exempt menthol for two years. As we said, there's an entire product line waiting to be launched.

To the member from Thornhill, I appreciate that she appreciated my youthful passion for my father's health and those around me, and I think that really does come back to the importance of discussing healthy lifestyles in school. There were so many anti smoking campaigns year after year when I was a student, and that really did help to form the basis of my understanding of what good health was and to make healthier choices—usually—for myself.

But as she pointed out, if we give the industry wiggle room, they will take it, and they will do damaging things. Back to my earlier point, I think that we need to not just be vigilant but we need to be smart, because, as I said, they're crafty.

To the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton, bringing it back to that education piece: food literacy and starting to focus on our youth and giving them the right information, giving them a full, holistic picture of health, teaching them about what they're eating and what's in the food that's good for them, not just focusing on what's bad for them.

As the member from Eglinton–Lawrence said, you can't control what people eat entirely. But I would say that our next big challenge should be to take a look at focused, targeted advertising that's directed at our kids for them to make poor choices when it comes to food. I think that's maybe the next direction that we should go.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?



**Mr. Yvan Baker:** It's an honour to speak to this bill this morning, and it's particularly an honour to have Chris Yaccato with us from the Ontario Lung Association, who has been a strong advocate on this issue and also a great friend.

This bill before us contains three pieces of proposed legislation. I had a chance to speak to this bill last night, I think it was around 9 p.m. or 10 p.m. last night. I really appreciated the comments made on all sides that—

**Mr. Todd Smith:** That's past your bedtime

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** It was past my bedtime.

It was a pleasure to have a chance to join the debate and consider the comments that have been made by all sides. I know a lot of comments have been made over a longer period of time on this particular bill.

Like I said, the bill contains three pieces of proposed legislation. While each schedule of this bill is distinct, all of them are predicated on the idea that if you eat better, exercise more and smoke less, up to 90% of type 2 diabetes, 80% of coronary heart disease and a third of all cancers can be avoided.

Last night, when I debated the bill—and I know a number of the members who are here were there last night—I spoke to my personal experience. I spoke about my mother and how careful she was as to what we ate as children. She obviously made it clear that we shouldn't smoke. My mom had been a smoker when she was young and quit and made sure we never smoked. She made sure that we exercised; we participated in a lot of physical activity. She made sure we ate healthy. To me, that's in part why this bill resonates so much with me, and I know it resonates with a lot of members on both sides of the aisle.

I would like to first provide a little context on Bill 45. This bill was originally introduced in February, 2014, but died on the order paper when the election was called last June. The bill was reintroduced in November, 2014. At second reading, Bill 45 had 11 hours of debate and, by my count, approximately 65 members had the opportunity to speak to it at that stage. The bill then was passed unanimously by all three parties at second reading. At the committee stage, there was considerable public input and rigorous debate; we had three days of public consultations with 38 presenters appearing before the committee. There were also two committee days of clause-by-clause examination and debate.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we believe that prevention is better than the cure, so it's in that context that we've introduced this bill. We can help ensure that Ontarians have the information they need to make better choices about staying healthy. I think about the comments from the member from Eglinton–Lawrence. He was just commenting on how this allows people to make better choices. We're not changing people's behaviour, but we're giving them the information they need to make appropriate decisions or better decisions. We can also help to protect Ontarians, especially the youngest among us, from dangers to their health and their well-being.

This legislation is looking to ban flavored tobacco products, including menthol. Flavoured tobacco products

have proved to be a gateway to tobacco use and addiction for our young people. When I think about why we're here, I think about why I'm here. I'm here to help improve the quality of life for the people of Ontario today, but also in the years and for the generations to come. Protecting our young people from something that is dangerous is truly important, and so I think this bill helps to do that.

In 2012-13, the Canadian Youth Smoking Survey found that one in four high school students who reported smoking have smoked menthol cigarettes in the past 30 days. And recent research in Ontario shows that menthol's cooling effect can reduce the harsh taste of tobacco, making it more tolerable for new smokers and making youth more likely to become habitual smokers—precisely what we're trying to avoid, precisely what we're trying to protect our young people from.

This piece of legislation also deals with menu labeling, and I had a chance to speak to that last night. We know that menu labels at the point of purchase have been shown to increase awareness of nutritional information and directly influence the choices that people make. They influence consumer behaviour. Again, we can't change the way people behave, but we can give them information to make the informed choices. If passed, this legislation would require the posting of calories on menus and menu boards. And it will raise public awareness about calorie content of foods eaten outside the home—I know that the member from Oshawa spoke about that in her remarks just a few minutes ago—making it easier for people to make healthier choices when dining out, and encourage industry to offer healthier items and reformulate high-calorie menu items.

If you think about what this is going to do, with calories posted on a menu, industry will have to think about what they're putting on their menu, the calorie content and how they may want to change or adapt their menus accordingly, to make sure people are healthier, to adapt to those healthier choices.

We've seen that happen in the food industry over the course of the last few decades, in particular, to more positive health outcomes and healthier foods on shelves and in stores. I think that's something that we all strive for and want to achieve.

Finally, this legislation proposes to regulate the sale and the promotion of e-cigarettes. Look, I understand that e-cigarettes are an emerging trend in Ontario. There is concern about the possible health effects of e-cigarette use, particularly on our young people, as well as the implications for tobacco use prevention and cessation.

When it comes to the health effects of e-cigarettes for good or for ill, the jury is still out. That's just the reality. In the meantime, the idea behind this bill is to take a precautionary approach, and with our proposed e-cigarette legislation we're trying to protect youth and Ontarians from what may be an emerging harm.

Now, when I think about why I'm here in the Legislature, why I ran for office, why we all ran for office—when I talk to members on both sides of the aisle, the

response I hear most often from folks, and certainly what I tell people when they ask me in my community of Etobicoke Centre as to why I ran for office, is because I came here to make a difference. I came here to impact the lives of the people of Ontario, people in my community in particular. I know we all feel that way. That's why we're here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make a difference, and as you know, this bill, I think, will make a difference. But as you know, we introduced this piece of legislation in November 2014. We allowed the debate to continue when we reached six and a half hours of debate on this bill so more members could speak to the bill and share their views. We've heard some excellent views and some excellent feedback from both sides of the aisle. Combined with second and third readings, this bill has seen 17 hours of debate and, according to my count, which may be off by a few members, about 77 members have either spoken to the bill or participated in the debate during questions and comments.

I believe there has been considerable debate on this bill, and we've heard a wide range of viewpoints, opinions and perspectives. My personal belief is that it's time that this bill be put to a vote on third reading and proclaimed into law as soon as possible. All sides support this bill, and there's a lot of work that we want to do. I want to make a difference. We all want to make a difference, and to do that, there are a lot of pieces of legislation that I know we all, on both sides, want to get to and debate so that we can make that difference for our constituents and for the people of Ontario.

0940

If we do this, if we can pass this bill and move on to the next piece of legislation to be debated here in the House, we can move on to a number of really, really substantive matters. I know that a lot of them touch all our communities. They certainly touch my community of Etobicoke Centre. There are a number of pieces of important legislation already introduced which—I know on this side and, I'm sure, on the other side—we would love to debate and move through the legislative process. Just a few examples:

- Bill 9, Ending Coal for Cleaner Air Act;
- Bill 31, the keeping Ontario's roads safe act;
- Bill 37, Invasive Species Act;
- Bill 40, Agriculture Insurance Act;
- Bill 49, Ontario Immigration Act;
- Bill 52, Protection of Public Participation Act;
- Bill 66, Great Lakes Protection Act;
- Bill 73, Smart Growth for Our Communities Act;
- Bill 80, Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act;
- Bill 100, Supporting Ontario's Trails Act;
- Bill 103, Protecting the School Year Act.

I'd like to get to those bills as soon as we possibly can. I think we'd all like to spend some time debating some of those important pieces of legislation currently before the House, but we really can't until Bill 45 is dealt with. And so, as a result, I move that this question be now put.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Baker has moved that the question be now put. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Thank you. This vote will be deferred until after question period.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Point of order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I called for the point of order before the vote was taken. I do not believe that the—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I cannot accept your point of order. The vote has, in fact, been taken and we have, in fact, deemed that a deferred vote will take place following question period.

Orders of the day. I recognize the Minister of Northern Development and Mines.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** This used to be a democracy.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** He's challenging the chair.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I'm challenging this group over there. I'm challenging you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order. I will not take that as a direct attack or a comment toward the Speaker.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Not to you, sir; not to you in any way, shape or form.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Now that we have order resumed, back to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines on orders of the day.

## AGRICULTURE INSURANCE ACT (AMENDING THE CROP INSURANCE ACT, 1996), 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ASSURANCE AGRICOLE (MODIFIANT LA LOI DE 1996 SUR L'ASSURANCE-RÉCOLTE)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 25, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Once again, it's an honour to be able to stand in the House to talk about agriculture on behalf of my constituents in Timiskaming-Cochrane and many of my farmer friends throughout the province.

Actually, it's a good segue into this bill because the Making Healthier Choices Act, on which debate was just closed, is talking about making healthier choices. The



way to have the ability to make healthier choices is to be able to buy good Ontario food. One of the ways to ensure that good Ontario food is available is to make sure that the producers who grow that food have the ability to be protected by insurance programs, and that's what this bill basically talks about.

Some of you will recall that this is my 15-minute closure on my hour lead-in. The take-away message from yesterday from the hour lead-in, for those not involved in the agricultural sector, is: If you're thinking about having barbecues this summer, the time to buy your beef is now.

**Interjection:** Oh, is it?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Why is that?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Because after years of punishingly low prices, the beef industry has rebounded, and producers needed it. But once that expensive beef gets through the system, you're going to see huge sticker shock for beef in the stores. It's starting, but this is just the start.

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** I'm a vegetarian.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** My colleague from Bramalea-Gore-Malton is not worried about that sticker shock, Speaker, because he's a vegetarian. More power to him. But for those of us who really do enjoy a good cut of beef, as I do, if it comes on sale, this is the time to buy it.

That was the take-away message from my last 45 minutes for the people at home.

This is an important bill. It's an enabling piece of legislation. But I'd like to make it very clear that by itself, this bill makes no difference to any producer. I believe now there are 90 crops that can be covered under a provincially mandated insurance program. This bill has the potential to increase those numbers, not only of crops but of other agriculture commodities, like livestock. This bill allows the negotiations to begin. But the bill by itself doesn't do that.

This bill in Ontario has been a long, long, long time coming. Crop insurance—or agricultural product insurance is I believe what this bill is dealing with now, Bill 40. This concept that it should cover a wider variety of agricultural production was agreed to at a federal-provincial agriculture minister conference in 2003, Mr. Speaker. Every other province in the country has moved ahead already; in fact, many have programs.

I can distinctly remember when this bill was brought to the Legislature. Some of the members on the government side were moving with lightning speed. Well, 2003 to 2015 is not lightning speed. That could suggest that there are some management issues in how this government organizes the bill process. I think we're seeing this now in these last two weeks. They seem to be complaining that they can't get their bills through, but instead of focusing on the bills that they really want to get passed, they keep pushing more on top of the pile. Some of these bills were introduced last week—the week before last. Last week was constituency week, so the week before last. On the farm, we try to get some jobs done before we put more jobs on the list. This government doesn't seem to be focused on that.

But I digress, Speaker. In my last few minutes, I'd like to focus on possibly the most important part of the process for the development of this bill, and that's committee hearings. We did have people come to present regarding this bill. We had a day of committee hearings in Toronto, which is kind of par for the course for this government; they like to have committee hearings in Toronto. For an agricultural bill, it makes absolutely no sense to have committee meetings only in Toronto. Actually, the committee held a day in Guelph, which makes more sense. Committee hearings are probably the most important part, certainly one of the most important parts, of developing legislation. The people who present at committee actually deal with the industries on a day-to-day basis.

I'd like to go through a few of the presenters and what their main points were. They were very valid points.

The first presenter in Toronto was Amy Cronin. She's the chair of Ontario Pork. Amy and her family know a lot about pork, about the hog sector. They have a 3,500 sow farrow-to-finish operation. For those of you who are not familiar with that terminology, that's a substantial farm. Those who are not familiar with agriculture would maybe term that as a factory farm. Well, it's not; it's a family farm. Family farms in modern commercial agriculture need to be big enough so the family can afford a standard of living equivalent to any other business person. That's why farms are getting bigger.

Amy was very well spoken regarding her industry, and she was in favour of this bill. One of the things that Amy brought forward, which I didn't know, is that the hog industry—and hopefully I get this terminology right—across Canada has been looking at this because in some places they have these programs, and they're quite far along in this process. They've got a national hog mortality insurance task team looking at this because we're talking about big numbers, and they're looking at actual numbers with actuaries who are looking at how this insurance program would work.

**0950**

What I got from that is that they're past the conceptual part and they're going to need to know numbers, because part of this bill, part of agricultural product insurance, is that the producer pays 40%, the province pays 26% and the federal government pays 34%. I believe the administration costs are half and half. But anyway, for the majority, that's the way it goes. So if the province is going to put forward a program to insure the hog sector, which is very important and would be very beneficial to the hog sector, that 26% of provincial money is going to have to come from somewhere. The hog sector is fairly far along in this program, so they would need to know where that 26% is going to come from. That was a point that kept coming through over and over with the presenters, and there's a reason.

I'd like to go to the last presenter, who was Scott Persall from the Grain Farmers of Ontario. The Grain Farmers of Ontario are already covered because their commodities are covered by the current regime, and they

will continue to be covered. But they're worried—not that they begrudge the other commodity sectors; not at all—that if the government doesn't come up with some new money and they try to simply rob Peter to pay Paul and dilute other programs, it will be a net loss to the other commodities. This could very well happen, because there's another program—agriculture is a very complicated sector, and the government programs that work within that sector are very complicated. I could list the whole group of them. A very important one is the Risk Management Program. With risk management, you can manage price volatility, because agriculture is very cyclical. Remember when I talked how now is the time to buy beef? In the last 10 years, the beef sector, because of BSE, was devastated, and they should have had some kind of program in the last 10 years. But it's very cyclical.

They created commodity groups, and the provincial government came together and put forward a risk management program. It's a very good program. Originally, it didn't have a cap, so a farmer could insure himself with the government and you could take that to the bank. One of the great things about that program was that it was bankable and predictable, until the government put a cap on it. It was calculated that the program, in the worst-case scenario, in the worst years, would take \$200 million, and they put a cap at \$100 million. That program no longer became bankable and predictable. It's still a good program. It's not the program that was originally envisioned.

The program works because this year it's predicted that it won't even use the full amount of money. Actually, if you look in the budget that was proposed, one of the major savings that the government is trumpeting is the fact that they are predicting putting much less money into agriculture programs, which, to a farmer, isn't good news—but also to a government that rightfully trumpets the importance of agriculture, because agriculture is number one or two in the province for creating jobs. A lot of people wouldn't know, Speaker, that 760,000 jobs rely on agriculture in this province. But for that sector to be stable, the farmers have to have good programs. So the Risk Management Program was a good program until the government capped it. It was a great program; now it's an okay program, but it's not the program that it was.

Where I'm leading to is that with this agricultural insurance program, which basically insures you against weather and against disease, if you would like to participate, since they capped the risk management, there is no guarantee that they wouldn't simply take that money out of another agricultural program to help fund an insurance program for the pork sector or an insurance program for the beef sector.

We were talking last night, as we were debating among ourselves during the real debate in night sittings, that the government could conceivably try to close Ridgetown College to take some money to create a new agriculture insurance program. Or they could cut out half of Guelph.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Don't suggest it.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm not trying to suggest it; I'm trying to put it on the table so people know what could happen. That's not the intent of this and it shouldn't be, but there has been no money attached. In the budget, it says we're going to spend a lot less money on agricultural programs.

So here we're talking about increasing agricultural programs, which should be done. Other provinces have done it. The pork sector should be covered. The beef sector should be covered. There are all kinds of sectors that should be covered, and there seems to be no money.

Another issue that hasn't been brought up yet—we brought it up at committee, and I brought it up in the technical briefings. I'd like to thank the ministry for providing us technical briefings. I brought up supply management, and right away they said, "No, no, supply management isn't covered because supply management is a whole different system." I said, "Whoa, wait a second. Supply management is an income program." It's the best marketing and management program, bar none, in this country. That's why we have stable prices for milk and poultry products in this country, and that's why we can guarantee what's in the milk in this country, because the milk consumed in this country is produced in this country with very high standards and very high regulations.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** You were a dairy farmer?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes.

An example: We recently had avian flu where farmers lost their whole cycle. So their poultry flock is wiped out because of avian flu. That's not covered by supply management.

So once again, will they be allowed to negotiate with the government to create a program for supply-managed sectors? The answer we got right away was a no. But I'd like to ask the Ministry of Agriculture and the minister to really think that through, because supply management—if you have a dairy herd that's wiped out with—it used to be that we'd have a whole herd wiped out from brucellosis. We've eradicated brucellosis because if brucellosis was detected in a dairy cow—boom—your herd was gone.

They had ad hoc programs to try and help the farmer, but again, if the dairy industry would like to negotiate an insurance program to ensure against calamity, which that is—catastrophe or disease—they should be allowed to do so. It shouldn't be a flat no because you're supply managed. So far, all I've heard from the technical people at OMAF is it's a flat no because it's supply managed. Your income is already regulated. Your daily income might be regulated if you produce your quota but that doesn't insure you against catastrophe.

So in closing, we are in favour of Bill 40. Bill 40 is enabling legislation that allows commodity groups to negotiate with the government to create individual commodity insurance programs to insure against disease and weather, because farmers have to deal with that on a daily basis. There was a frost this spring, and I saw on the news this morning that it wiped out a lot of grapes. So



it might not be a great time for Ontario wine in the next little while.

It wiped out a lot of crops. It wiped out crops indiscriminately. In my area we had frost. Some crops that should have been frozen didn't freeze, and other crops that are relatively frost-hardy froze.

In closing, this is enabling legislation, legislation we're in favour of, but, as always, the devil is in the details. There used to be a Wendy's commercial—"Where's the beef?" Well, the question for this program is, "Where's the money going to come from? Where is the money?" In your budget this year, you are specifically saying there is less money for agricultural programs, so where's the money coming from for this one?

1000

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Han Dong:** I'm very pleased to respond to the member from Timiskaming-Cochrane's point of view on this particular bill. I was listening carefully to what he had to say and I realized that I just wanted to, for the record, point out that in my riding, which is an urban riding—downtown Toronto—this bill is also very important to the residents, because farmers feed the cities.

We eat, and in my riding, just so you know, there are a lot of newly established farmers' markets. Whether it's CityPlace—now they have a permanent farmers' market throughout the summer—or Liberty Village, there are farmers' markets. It's a very trendy thing to do now because people's demand for raw food is on the increase.

I know the beef farmers will be here this week. I look forward to that. It's always a great feast. It's very kind and very smart of them to actually come to Queen's Park and advocate on behalf of their members. I look forward to that. Every year I get great conversations out of that.

This bill, if passed, will give some more tools, more coverage and more protection for our farmers. That's what we need because we're in a time that's not looking at just feeding Ontarians; our product has a good reputation around the world. It's in high demand around the world. Our Minister of Agriculture just recently joined a delegation led by the Minister of International Trade to China. From that trip they promoted the Ontario agricultural sector and they closed a lot of deals, they signed a lot of agreements. I look forward to that.

I appreciate the member's comments and I look forward to his support. I'll be supporting this bill personally.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** The member for Timiskaming-Cochrane made some very interesting points this morning with respect to the crop insurance legislation, Bill 40. I think it's important to point out that the government, unfortunately, is routinely using closure motions and, in some cases, time allocation to shut down debate.

When you think about our agri-food industry in the province of Ontario, I think that farming and agriculture

has to be the most important economic activity in the province. We all need to eat; we all love to eat.

We need to spend more time debating and discussing agricultural issues. Of course, as we know, on the opposition side of the House we represent rural Ontario in the Ontario Legislature and the government side of the House represents, largely, urban Ontario. We have lots to say about these issues, but unfortunately, when the government uses time allocation, or in the case of Bill 40 at second reading, when they move a closure motion to curtail debate, we don't all get a chance to speak.

I think it's important also to point out that we have something very exciting happening in Wellington county this week. We are opening a new dairy facility in the community of Elora. I know that the Minister of Agriculture and Food is going to be joining us in the celebration. The provincial government has invested a significant amount of money in what we're calling the new Livestock Research and Innovation Centre dairy facility. It's a partnership with the University of Guelph. The federal government is also putting in some \$3 million.

It will ensure that the Ontario dairy industry will have a state-of-the-art, world-class dairy research facility to be built to address the research, education, training needs and priorities of Ontario and Canadian dairy sectors. I said to my friend the member for Oxford that this really makes Wellington county the centre of the universe when it comes to milk production in the province of Ontario.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I hesitate to start a war in the Legislature with my colleague, but I think manifestly that it is true that the research and development that will take place in this community will show what Wellington county can do. We really look forward to this exciting event this coming Thursday.

I want to again congratulate the member for Timiskaming-Cochrane for his presentation this morning.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I'm pleased to be able to rise in the Legislature and make comments on the comments from my colleague from Timiskaming-Cochrane. I'm always struck when I really look around this room and recognize the diverse backgrounds and talents and stories that we draw from in this room. Certainly, to have a farmer speaking about farming and about the agricultural industry, we are all richer for it.

Some of his points, that if the government doesn't come up with new money but rather if it moves or shifts money from one bucket to the other, we're not getting any further ahead—I think that's a huge question that needs to be addressed. As my colleague pointed out, the government is trumpeting agriculture on the one hand, and the importance of it, but then pats itself on the back that it is putting less money into agriculture with the other hand. I wouldn't say that is the way to grow.

In Oshawa, as the member across the way was talking about, there are some communities that may not have farms, per se, but they benefit from the farmers' markets, and in Oshawa I'm surrounded by Durham region and

many farms in the area, and we, of course, have vibrant farmers' markets.

We spent time this morning talking about making healthier choices, and I think that these two topics are connected because as we're encouraging our communities to eat healthier, I think we also need to be having the "buy local" conversation—not just about supporting the local economy or supporting our local friends and farmers but really looking at why local food is better for you: that it ripens on the vine, it ripens on the tree and it doesn't just ripen in a box in the back of a truck; that we let food grow the way it's supposed to just up the road, we buy it locally and we're all that much healthier for it.

I thank you very much for having the opportunity today, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today and speak about the Agriculture Insurance Act, 2014. I also want to commend the other members for the comments that they made earlier.

In my riding of Halton, we have a number of different types of growers. Of course we have crop growers, fruit growers and all kinds of specialty crops and so on, but we also have people who are livestock owners and growers, and people would have bee farms. So I can't tell you how important business risk management programs like production insurance are for the producers in my riding. This really helps them all deal with situations that are outside of their control.

As we all know, the weather lately has been very unpredictable and people are dealing with all kinds of sudden and dramatic changes in the weather that really we haven't had in past years. In addition to that, there's of course disease and extreme market fluctuation. What this insurance does, really, is make timely payments to producers and eliminates the need for costly, ad hoc responses to some of these adverse conditions.

Essentially, what we're saying is that we shouldn't be in a situation where we're managing things with crisis management. People need a plan. They need to know that they are going to have something there that will help them in times of need. That's exactly what this is, because our producers, our grain growers, our fruit growers, our livestock growers, they all need that peace of mind as they're planning for the years ahead.

We know that many of these people have lots of challenges on a daily basis as it is with their daily lives, so making it easier for them allows them to better manage risk, encourages greater innovation, job creation and, really, growth in the sector. It helps them plan for the future so that we can make sure that our agri-business is as strong as it should be in this province.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Timiskaming–Cochrane for final comments.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'd like to thank the members from Trinity–Spadina, Wellington–Halton Hills, Oshawa and Halton for their thoughtful comments. The basic issue with this bill is that it's enabling legislation—by

itself, it doesn't change anything. There are good insurance programs for crops currently. There are good risk management programs available for crops and other livestock sectors. This bill would allow commodity sectors that aren't currently covered by production insurance to negotiate with the government to try to come up with insurance programs for commodities like beef and pork that are not covered now. That's good.

The member from Halton said that producers need to be able to plan. That's very true. But what producers also need to know is where the government is going to come up with their portion of the money, the 26%. Producers know where 40% of the program cost is going to come from. That comes from the producer. That's the producer's part of the insurance. But the 26% that comes from the province—there is no mention of where that's going to come from. That will come later in negotiations. But there has been no indication from the government where that money is going to come from. It certainly wasn't indicated in the budget.

The fear of the producers—the ones who are now covered by the programs that already exist—is that if new programs are developed, money will simply be shifted from other agricultural programs, which in effect could be a net loss to producers.

Do we support this legislation? Yes. But the devil is in the details. Where is the money going to come from?

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I'd like to thank all members for the debate this morning.

Since it is almost 10:15, this House stands recessed until 10:30.

*The House recessed from 1012 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I'm delighted to introduce Cheryl Fullerton, from the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association—a frequent visitor.

**Mr. Robert Bailey:** I'd like to introduce a good friend of mine, John Cruickshank, from Grimsby, father of Duncan Cruickshank, one of our pages today.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I would like to introduce Star Jewell Martin; she's a page here at the Legislative Assembly. Her grandmother, Gaydonna Baker, is visiting. Our page Star is from Kenora–Rainy River.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I'm pleased to welcome to the House today the family of today's page captain, Emma Wai: Evelyn Wai, Tsang Wing Wai, Trevor Wai and David Wai. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** I'd like to welcome, once again, the father of one of our pages, Bridget Le Donne. Her dad, Dino Le Donne, is here with us again.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I also have a page from my riding of Thunder Bay–Atikokan here this week, also a page captain today: Emma Schubert. Her mother, Andrea Schubert, is here in one of the galleries. Welcome to Queen's Park.



**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's my pleasure to welcome Paul Kossta, from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, also a frequent visitor; someone who is watching what's going on in the benches.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** It's my pleasure to introduce, in the east gallery, a former MPP, former minister of the province of Ontario and currently the mayor of the city of Ottawa, Jim Watson, here for Ottawa Day at Queen's Park, headed up by Invest Ottawa. I'd also like to introduce Bruce Lazenby, president and CEO of Invest Ottawa, and the entire delegation of business people from the city of Ottawa. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Norm Miller:** It's my pleasure to welcome Shena Terry, who is here visiting her daughter, Jessica Terry, a page from Parry Sound-Muskoka. Welcome, Shena.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we've noticed that another member of the assembly—you're going to do it? All right. I'm going to sit down.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Davenport.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce to the Legislature this morning a group of seniors who are visiting from the Abrigo Centre, a fantastic organization in my riding of Davenport. I'd like to especially welcome Marilia dos Santos and Gerry Luciano, who are leading this group today. Welcome, seniors.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'ai de la grande visite aujourd'hui. Je commence avec Lucas Egan et Éric Desrochers, qui sont venus ici pour le lancement de l'Université de l'Ontario français—

*Applause.*

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Merci—Jérémie Spadafora et Caroline Gélinault—pas « Gélinas »—de la FESFO; et, bien sûr, Alain Dupuis du RÉFO. Bienvenue à Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** As part of Invest Ottawa day at the Legislature, j'aimerais présenter M. Dina Epale, executive director of the Orléans Chamber of Commerce; and a constituent of mine, Ian Faris, who also happens to be the executive director of the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I'm going to invoke a loophole today in recognizing a former member of this assembly indirectly. I'm pleased to say that Brayden Sterling is the page from Nepean-Carleton this year. His grandfather, of course, is known, but I'm only allowed to introduce his lovely wife, Joan. It's really nice to see you here, and I will not usurp the powers of the Speaker.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je voudrais présenter, ici avec le groupe d'Ottawa, Mona Fortier, qui est membre de mon comité aviseur sur les services en français.

And the best lawyer in Ottawa: Grant Jameson, with Norton Rose, who is a constituent of mine.

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like the assembly to recognize John Cruickshank, who is in the gallery today, and his son, who's here as a page: Duncan.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, as you've heard, there is a great delegation from Ottawa that is visiting Queen's Park. Today, I want to welcome Peter Ricketts, Saad

Bashir, Warren Creates, Jeff Westeinde, Don Grant, Leopold Lax, Noel Buckley, Kathryn Moore, Ryan Kennery, Ian Faris, Doug Wotherspoon, Tofy Mussivand and Steve West. I welcome them to Queen's Park and encourage everybody to come to the reception tonight in the Legislative dining room.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** It's my pleasure to introduce to the Legislature Rajiv Kaushal from First Derivatives. Thank you so much. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I just want to introduce some stakeholders: Cristin Napier, Nadia Formigoni, Nicole McInerney, Sara Trotta, Kalasian Kalachelvan, Rubina Kharel, Chris Yaccato, Monica Sarkar, Gemma Styling and Stephanie Lear. They're here from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Canadian Cancer Society and the Ontario Lung Association. They're here to support us on Bill 45.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, as I mentioned, we've got a really big delegation visiting from Ottawa, so I want to introduce a few more people and welcome them to Queen's Park: Ritch Dusome, Blair Patacairk, Sonya Shorey, Maria Pugh, Jonathan Bartlett and Richard Chase. We welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It's my great pleasure and honour to welcome my good friend Professor Mussivand, the inventor of the artificial heart from the University of Ottawa, visiting the House.

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** I forgot to name a dear friend, Don Grant. We have been friends—I was there working in the delivery room when his two sons were born, so welcome, Don, to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Last call for introductions: the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes, point of order, Mr. Speaker: I'm asking for unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the speedy passage of the bill that was introduced yesterday that would ensure that schoolchildren are back in school tomorrow—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That particular motion, unless I am informed of any other issues that are changeable in its result—I've ruled on it twice. This will be the last time.

There's a request to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? I heard a no.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Even though it was stepped on, I would like to introduce, as is the tradition of the Speaker, former members: The member from Ottawa West-Nepean in the 38th and 39th Parliament, Mr. Jim Wilson—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Jim Watson.

1040

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You guys are only giving me enough time to think about my comeback. See how soon we forget?

My apologies, Jim.

Also, respecting the member from Nepean–Carleton’s respect for the fact that I was allowed to introduce, we have with us the member for Carleton–Grenville in the 31st, 32nd and 33rd Parliaments, the member from Carleton in the 34th, 35th and 36th Parliaments, the member from Lanark–Carleton in the 37th and 38th Parliaments, and the member for Carleton–Mississippi Mills in the 39th Parliament, Mr. Norm Sterling.

I hope you noted that I got your name right.

## ANNUAL REPORT, INFORMATION AND PRIVACY COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I beg to inform the House that I have laid upon the table the 2014 annual report from the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.

## LEGISLATIVE PAGES

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** At this time I would ask all members to join me in welcoming the new pages for this session and ask them to assemble: Vaughan, Mr. Ram Ahuja; Niagara West–Glanbrook, Duncan Cruickshank; Nickel Belt, Abby Deschene; Ottawa–Orléans, Robert Heckbert; Trinity–Spadina, Julien Jouan; Hamilton Mountain, Bridget Le Donne; Nipissing, Sheila MacDougall; Kenora–Rainy River, Star Jewell Martin; Toronto–Danforth, Madeleine Randmaa; Timmins–James Bay, Jany Scherer; Thunder Bay–Atikokan, Emma Schubert; London West, Maya Scott; Scarborough–Agincourt, Philip Shen; Nepean–Carleton, Brady Sterling; Mississauga–Streetsville, Megan Sweetman; Parry Sound–Muskoka, Jessica Terry; Willowdale, Emma Wei; Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale, Dale Whitmore; Sault Ste. Marie, Katelyn Woods; Etobicoke Centre, Luke Woolcock; and Mississauga East–Cooksville, Kerry Zheng.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finally, I would like to introduce, in the Speaker’s gallery, two friends of mine, one a very long-term friend and a trustee from the Brant Norfolk Haldimand Catholic District School Board, Mr. Bill Chopp; and the chairman of the board, Mr. Rick Petrella. Welcome.

## CONTEMPT OF PARLIAMENT

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I have received notice of an intent to raise a point of privilege from the member from Leeds–Grenville. I am prepared to hear the point of privilege at this time. However, since the notice is quite detailed, I would ask the member to summarize his argument.

The member from Leeds–Grenville.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present, pursuant to standing order

21(c), the notice and my intent to now present a point of privilege. It’s concerning a possible breach of privilege with regard to the Ombudsman’s report released yesterday, entitled *In The Dark*, and Hydro One’s actions when questioned regarding their billing practices.

Speaker, misleading the House is a charge that I don’t make lightly, and I take the likelihood that Hydro One may have intentionally misled the House very seriously. I am concerned that the behaviour shown by Hydro One, as documented in the Ombudsman’s report, could amount to contempt of this Legislature.

Parliamentary authorities are unanimous about the House being misled and state that the House may treat the making of a deliberately misleading statement as contempt. Deliberately misleading the House is an affront to every single member of this House, no matter whether they’re in government or in the two opposition parties.

I will try to summarize my brief. First, I wanted to talk about McGee’s Parliamentary Practice. It states, “In order to establish a prima facie case finding that a breach of privilege and contempt has occurred, three elements must be present: One, it must be proven that the statements were misleading; two, it must be established that the member at the time knew the statement was incorrect; and three, in the making of the statement, the minister intended to mislead the House.” I am confident, Speaker, that all three elements are present in this case that I’m bringing on the floor this morning.

Regarding McGee’s first criterion, that it must be proven that the statements were misleading, the Ombudsman’s report made it clear that the statements and actions of Hydro One were misleading. While specifically misleading statements were made by several officials at Hydro One, it was truly, in my opinion, a systematic response to all issues designed with an intent to mislead.

You’ll note that on page 6, I outlined four specific points from the Ombudsman’s report, passages where we became aware of the systematic issue, the fact that statements were made to the Ombudsman’s staff to the contrary, and the fact that these staff were encouraged and directed to do so. Again, I’ve outlined the four points to you on page 6 regarding the CEO’s response. While he remained positive, as in the report, an internal email from other senior officials in December referred to the company entering into crisis mode.

All of the four points that I made, Speaker, were misleading. An internal email communication from July 2013 discussed accounts that have not been billed under the new system, noting the need for “ensuring we do not go to the media” and that “senior executives undertook to raise the issue with the board’s” regulatory and other public policy bodies. I’ve outlined that on page 6.

The second criterion that I believe is satisfied is that Hydro One knew the statements were incorrect, and I’ll reiterate some from passages that were in that report. The one thing that I do want to highlight is that on December 18, six months after Hydro became aware of the serious nature of the issue, Hydro One’s CEO responded to an inquiry from the Minister of Energy’s office and gave the



impression that the issue was minimal, stressing the “low number of customers who had submitted complaints.” I’ve outlined how this has satisfied that second criterion.

The final criterion is also satisfied in this case, that the statement must have been made with the intention to mislead the House. While the statements were not made in the House or in committee, they were made to mislead the minister’s office, which was relaying that misleading information to this House and members of the Legislative Assembly.

Hydro One was being questioned by the Ombudsman, who was acting upon 180 requests from members who were advocating on behalf of our constituents. The House, its members and our independent officer of the Legislature—we were all looking for accurate and honest information to do our jobs, to represent our constituents and to help them, many of whom were most in need, our vulnerable residents. We were trying to get answers, and we were being blocked, deceived, at every step.

I want to remind you and members of the House that the CEO made misleading statements to the minister’s office when he knew they were in crisis mode. In particular, I want to highlight an exchange between a staffer and his or her supervisor when they discussed “holding the line with messages” after a call from the Ombudsman and to report back if they “get the feeling that” the Ombudsman was “going to investigate more aggressively or escalate....”

I would like to again mention a statement from an internal Hydro One email: “I know corporate communications does not recommend responding to these types of articles, but this one may need us to do something to repair damage to our reputation.”

1050

Speaker, these responses clearly confirm that third section.

O’Brien and Bosc note, “Misleading a minister or a member has also been considered a form of obstruction and thus a *prima facie* breach of privilege.” They cite a specific example where Speaker Jerome made a ruling in which he said, “I can interpret that testimony in no other way than meaning that a deliberate attempt was made to obstruct the member in the performance of his duties and, consequently, to obstruct the House itself.”

I believe that the statements made by Hydro One officials to the minister, to members of this House and to the Ombudsman can only be interpreted as an attempt to deliberately obstruct us and those officers from carrying on their duties.

I’m going to wrap up by quoting from page 8 of my response. In 1987, Speaker Fraser stated, “The privileges of a member are violated by any action which might impede him or her in the fulfillment of his or her duties and functions.”

By misleading the Minister of Energy—the ability to fulfill his duties was seriously impeded.

Once again, I respectfully request that you consider my point of privilege, the ruling precedents and the facts that are presented by the Ombudsman’s report. I believe

that you’ll find a *prima facie* case of breach of privilege and contempt. I would ask that you consider it and, if your ruling is favourable, that the House investigate the matter further.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The government House leader on the same point of order.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I rise to respond to the point of privilege raised by the member from Leeds–Grenville today. We received his submission, I believe, around 9 a.m. this morning.

Speaker, as the member himself mentioned earlier, in order to establish that the House has been misled, Speakers’ rulings are clear that three tests must be met:

(1) The statement was misleading;

(2) It must be established that the person making the statement knew at the time that the statement was incorrect;

(3) In making the statement, there was an intention to mislead the House.

Speaker, in this case, it is difficult to even address this point of privilege, because the member has not demonstrated any instance when statements were made to the House that could have been misleading.

There is absolutely no evidence that this House or a member of this House has been misled in the discharge of their duty.

Indeed, the process that the member complains of occurred wholly outside this House.

I understand that members of this House filed a complaint with the Ombudsman and that the Ombudsman, in his official capacity, investigated as a result of those complaints.

In any event, the CEO of Hydro One, Carm Marcello, addressed this issue in the media yesterday. He accepted the Ombudsman’s recommendations and went on to say, “Last year I wrote to my 1.3 million Hydro One customers and I told them I was sorry. I wrote to them and explained that the poor service they experienced was not warranted. I wrote to every one of my customers, including the 95% who have never experienced a problem. In that time we fixed our billing issues. We focused on fixing technical issues but we had failed to appreciate how those issues would impact our customers.”

Speaker, he advised that Hydro One provides regular updates to their board of directors and management team and that they provided all the updates to all of the agencies, including the ministry.

Additionally, I understand that the Minister of Energy has asked the chair of Hydro One to report back publicly within 40 business days with an action plan to ensure that all of the Ombudsman’s recommendations in this report are acted on.

It is abundantly clear that there was no breach of privilege or contempt in this case. As a result, I request that you dismiss the member’s point of privilege. In the event that you do not rule today, Speaker, I request that you provide us time to submit detailed written submissions to you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I thank the member from Leeds–Grenville and the House leader for their

input. I will reserve my ruling and get back to the House shortly.

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm still here. I thought maybe you talked to Patrick Brown and knew something I didn't know this morning.

My question is for the Premier. The day after this government introduced back-to-work legislation for members of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has now announced it is ramping up its work-to-rule campaign.

Elementary teachers will not write transition reports or participate in transition meetings for grade 8 students, they will not plan future field trips and they will not participate in professional development. This is just the next step before a full-blown strike.

Premier, will you guarantee the parents of elementary school students that they won't see province-wide strikes this September in their sector?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The member opposite is making a huge leap. The fact is that there is a collective bargaining process that is under way and we need to let that unfold, and I know that the Minister of Education will want to comment.

I believe in the collective bargaining process. That's a fundamental difference between us and the party opposite. We actually believe that it's important to have a process in place and it's important to follow that process. There will be times when it works better than others, I acknowledge that, but that does not negate the importance of having a process that is respectful, in which everyone has a role and everyone understands what that role is, and that's what is in place in Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the Premier: This government has failed in negotiations with Durham, it has failed in negotiations with Rainbow in Sudbury, and failed in negotiations with Peel. The Premier and the education minister couldn't keep students in the classroom all because of a pathetic, cumbersome Bill 122 bargaining system.

Premier, these boards are just three of the 72 boards we have in Ontario. Parents and students could see this chaos and disruption spread one board at a time across the province because of this Liberal government's dysfunctional bargaining process. Our young leader Patrick Brown and the PC caucus know that Bill 103 is simply a band-aid solution.

Premier, how—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock, please. Order. Start the clock.

Finish, please.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** He will be sitting right over there in 2018. Premier, how many more back-to-work bills will you have to introduce over the coming months?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just speak to the process, because I said that it's important to have a process in place that everyone understands. The fact is that we worked with our partners, with the teachers' federations, with the unions—so teachers and support staff—and we worked with boards to put in place a process that reflects the reality that the provincial government is the funder of publicly funded education in Ontario, and there are issues that have to be resolved at a provincial table. It also reflects the reality that there are local issues that need to be bargained locally.

A number of years ago, when I was Minister of Education, there was an informal process that kind of reflected the reality that actually was a result of funding changes that had been made by the previous government. Those funding changes are in place. The province funds education, so that means you have to have a collective bargaining process that reflects that reality. That's what is in place.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Premier, it's a cumbersome mess you have on your hands. The three boards on strike this school year are just the beginning. Your government's mismanagement and flawed two-tier system have created education chaos for parents and students. You have dithered and dragged along the negotiations, meanwhile using the students as pawns.

Premier, Bill 122 is definitely the problem; the boards have said so, the teachers have said so. The Education Relations Commission said as much in yesterday's letter as well. Don't just bring in back-to-work legislation, bring in a fix to your flawed bargaining process so we don't see this disaster happen again and again and again across this province.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** As I said, the process that is in place reflects the reality that the province is the funder of the education system, and that there are local issues nonetheless that need to be addressed at the local level. But there is a provincial discussion that has to happen.

1100

You know, we have built into this process a review, so when we go through this round of bargaining, if there are changes that need to be made to the process, we will look at that. But the fact is that there has to be a process that reflects the reality. I don't believe that there shouldn't be a discussion at the local level, because I believe in school boards. I think it's important to have school boards



working with their employees. At the same time, I don't believe that school boards should have to take the full responsibility for negotiating the financial issues that the province is actually responsible for. If the members opposite had a suggestion that was constructive, we'd be happy to listen to that once this round is through.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Again to the Premier: The current Minister of Energy has held the hydro file for just over two years now. In that short amount of time, he has succeeded in having the Auditor General tell him that the government wasted \$1.1 billion on the gas plants relocations, another \$2 billion on smart meters, and now the Ombudsman has revealed that because of the minister's lack of action he has spent another \$88.3 million of taxpayers' money in an attempt to correct poor billing practices at Hydro One.

Added together, this almost \$4 billion in wasted money is only a few million shy of what this government is claiming it will net from the sale of Hydro One. My question to the Premier is, don't you think it's irresponsible to sell Hydro One just to make up for the mistakes of your incompetent minister?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will not accept interjections when I'm standing.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The question is precipitated by the Ombudsman's report yesterday. We have indicated that as a result of the new IT billing system, an unacceptable number of Hydro One customers over an extended period of time received an unacceptable level of service. The CEO of Hydro One and the government have apologized for the impact. While we know that Hydro One has been working hard to resolve outstanding issues and Hydro One has outlined that work in detail, further work and remediation is clearly required. I therefore asked the chair of Hydro One, David Denison, to report back to me within 40 days with a detailed action plan describing how Hydro One can further address the recommendations in the Ombudsman's report. I'll provide more details in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nepean–Carleton will come to order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the Premier: Not only did Hydro One waste millions of dollars, but their incompetent and callous actions have led to countless headaches and quite frankly unnecessary anxiety for ratepayers across this province. Ordinary residents had money incorrectly taken from their bank accounts, while

businesses were being overcharged millions of dollars. Yet with all of that systemic waste and lost money in the energy file, you're telling Ontarians that Hydro One no longer needs the oversight of the officers of this Legislature. You pushing through your budget bill will remove that oversight.

Premier, will you reverse your decision and remove any reference to Hydro One from your budget bill?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Hydro One is transforming from a crown corporation to a TSX public company. That will require changes. The legislation includes a provision that requires Hydro One to establish an ombudsman—an embedded ombudsman. What we have done is we have engaged, and he is engaged at this time, the former Auditor General of Canada, Denis Desautels, to oversee the embedding of that ombudsman in Hydro One to ensure and assure the public and the members of this House that the ombudsman will be accountable and will be transparent and will be meaningful going forward.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Back to the Premier; maybe she'd like to answer this: Ontarians don't trust your government and they don't trust your energy minister.

Without the investigations of the officers of the Legislature, none of this waste, abuse and deceit would have ever seen the light of day. The public has no confidence that Hydro One can govern itself in the best interests of the ratepayers of this province without the oversight and the accountability that these legislative officers bring to bear.

Premier, you need to seriously reconsider your plan to privatize Hydro One. Why won't you remove any reference to Hydro One from your budget bill?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Don't forget Harris.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, second time. Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Speaker, the members know that in last year's budget, we indicated we were going to study all of our enterprise assets, to repurpose them for infrastructure purposes. What we are doing now is taking 50% of the proceeds of sale and putting it on debt, and approximately 50% to invest in infrastructure.

This morning, the Premier was in Hamilton announcing a billion dollars of infrastructure for an LRT project. That is going to come from the proceeds of sale which are not coming from increased taxes, which are not coming from cutting services, nor are they coming from new debt. It's a responsible way to move forward, and this morning—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** This morning, the members of Invest Ottawa asked for more infrastructure. It's a priority everywhere in this province.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Slowly catching up, I wanted to make sure that the member heard me. I said to come to order, and the member from Nipissing, come to order.

New question.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Negotiations with high school teachers began months ago, and for months the Minister of Education has been sitting on the sidelines. She's watched as talks stalled, and instead of doing anything, she was "perplexed" and "confused."

On Thursday, we expect the Premier to legislate teachers back to work, but she's still going to have the same minister who failed to bring people together, the same minister who failed to get a deal, the same minister who failed to get our kids back into the classrooms.

Will the Premier fire her minister and show that she's serious about getting a deal and ending the chaos in our education system?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know that the leader of the third party understands the collective bargaining process. I know that she understands that it would be impossible for her to know exactly what the minister has been doing. The minister has been working extremely hard to keep everyone at the table, to keep the issues moving and to try to get a deal. That's as it should be, because that's where the deal has to be found, is at the table.

The point we're at right now is that the Education Relations Commission, which has been in place for many decades, has ruled on jeopardy of the year for the students who have been out of school. What is surprising to me is that the leader of the third party doesn't understand that the interests of the students are at stake right now. We have been part of a collective bargaining process. That process—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** One wrap-up sentence, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That collective bargaining process will continue, but we must get the students back into school. I would have thought that the NDP would have wanted that.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, on Thursday—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I am not sure that anyone wants to take that chance when I'm standing.

Supplementary, please.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On Thursday we expect the Premier to legislate teachers back to work, but the prob-

lems will not go away. The minister has blamed teachers. She's blamed boards of education—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. The member from Trinity-Spadina and the Minister of Economic Development, come to order.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** She's blamed teachers, she's blamed boards of education, and these days she's blaming the opposition. The truth is that, for months, this minister has watched from the sidelines and just passed the buck. She was given a job: Get a deal. She hasn't done that.

If the minister can't get the job done, then it's time for a new minister. So will the—

*Interjections.*

1110

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport—and I just might jump to warnings. This is insulting.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** If the minister can't get the job done, it's time for a new minister. Will this Premier do the right thing, fire her Minister of Education and appoint someone who can actually do the job?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the students who have been out for a number of weeks could be back in school today had the NDP worked with us.

I know that this is a difficult round of collective bargaining. I understand that. I understand that the collective bargaining process has to go on and that the deal is going to be found at the table. I understand that it's obviously going to take a bit more time. That doesn't mean nothing has been happening; it has been. It's going to take a bit more time. But in the interim, what's important is that we get the kids back into the classroom. That collective bargaining process can go on.

But the leader of the third party, in the past, has been part of a party that has supported getting workers back to work. Howard Hampton stated in 2002, "The government has done a wise thing here. Four days of debate, five days of debate, six days of debate would not have left anyone in a winning position." They voted to end the garbage strike—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** The only real solution to the chaos in the education sector is to actually bring people together. So far, this minister has only been pushing people away. She's perplexed by the issues. She blames everyone but herself. Her job was actually to get a deal, but she has failed at that spectacularly. It's the students, the parents and the teachers who are all paying the price.

The Premier needs to show that she's serious about a solution. She needs to fire her Minister of Education and appoint a minister who can actually bring people together and get a deal done. Is the Premier ready to get serious, or is she going to stand by her perplexed, confused and ineffective minister?

*Interjection.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Agriculture.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Well, I don't actually think that personal attacks get us anywhere.

I really believe that the people who are engaged in the collective bargaining process need to do their work. I believe that, and they're going to need a bit more time. In the interim, students in Oshawa, in Bramalea and in Nickel Belt could be in school today if the NDP had supported our back-to-work legislation in the first instance.

The fact is, the collective bargaining process is going—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order. Thank you. One sentence wrap-up.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Just to say, Mr. Speaker, that we want those kids back in school. We want the collective bargaining process to continue.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Well, the truth hurts, Speaker.

My question is for the Premier. The Premier likes to say that she respects municipalities, but the proof is in the pudding. The Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association says that northern communities are going to be hit hard by the Premier's Hydro One sell-off. Their president says, "There has been no consultation with these communities, which is in our opinion unfair.... We feel this decision to sell off Hydro One assets is merely short-term gain for long-term pain."

Will the Premier take Hydro One out of her Stephen-Harper-style omnibus budget and give groups like NOMA, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, an opportunity to have their say in some kind of public process? It's the least they deserve.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, it's interesting: The very first time I had a really in-depth conversation about northern infrastructure, I was Minister of Transportation, and I was meeting with mayors from northwestern Ontario. I can remember the mayor of Kenora, Dave Canfield, saying to me, "We need a consistent investment in roads and bridges." I think there are 19 bridges in Kenora. He was asking for predictable infrastructure funding.

In 2010, when I was the Minister of Transportation, that planted a seed that made it clear to me that we needed to do something that would provide infrastructure funding over the long term. That's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker: \$130 billion over the next 10 years. We are making investments across this province, including in northwestern Ontario, to make sure that communities, municipalities have what they need to thrive economically.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's not just NOMA, the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association; northern

municipalities are speaking out as well because they do not want to have to pay the price for this Premier's selling off of Hydro One. In fact, in the city of Kenora, Dave Canfield had a motion at his council, and they unanimously voted to send the Premier a letter, calling for her to pull the plug on selling Hydro One. That's what Dave Canfield has to say today.

The city of Fort Frances is supporting NOMA's resolution. Councillor Paul Ryan said, "I think they're going ahead kind of recklessly here."

These municipalities deserve to have a say. Will the Premier take Hydro One out of her Stephen-Harper-style omnibus bill and let the municipalities of Fort Frances and Kenora have a public hearing to have their say?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** You're not even in your seat.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I had the pleasure to be in Hamilton this morning. I just want to talk about what we were talking about in Hamilton, because it's directly related to this issue of having the funding to be able to invest in infrastructure.

We were pleased to announce that we will provide \$1 billion for capital costs to build a new LRT in Hamilton, and it was received very, very well.

What this LRT will do is it will offer service from McMaster University through downtown Hamilton to Queenston Circle. It will ultimately extend to Eastgate Square. The question I would ask that the leader of the third party is, which part of that project would she cancel if we did not have the funds to invest in infrastructure?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please.

Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's not just northwestern Ontario. The city of Hamilton, the city of Brantford, Prince Edward county, the city of Toronto—all are entertaining motions calling on this Premier to stop the sell-off of Hydro One, and more are coming.

They know that she's playing a game of false choices here. The Premier says that she respects municipalities, but respect means more than just lip service; it means actually listening to what people have to say.

Will the Premier take Hydro One out of her Stephen-Harper-style omnibus budget and let Ontarians have a say?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would ask the leader of the third party again: The LRT in Hamilton will ultimately extend to Eastgate Square. It will connect directly to the new West Harbour GO station, and that station will be ready in time for the—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek is warned.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, second time.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** That station will be ready for the Pan Am Games. We're also going to extend the GO rail from West Harbour station to a new GO station at Centennial Parkway in eastern Hamilton.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the leader of the third party, which part of those projects—or would she cancel the whole project? Would she just say that Hamilton doesn't need that connectivity to the rest of the greater Toronto and Hamilton area, that Hamilton doesn't need that new LRT so that it can thrive with its diverse economy? If we don't have the funds, we can't make that investment, and that's exactly what the leader of the third party is suggesting.

### JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Attorney General. Suraiya Gangaram was killed when she was stabbed by her former boyfriend, Lascelles Allen. He was out on bail, released with the condition that he could have no contact with her. Clearly, Lascelles Allen did not follow his bail conditions, and it led to the tragic death of Suraiya Gangaram, leaving three children without their mom.

This tragedy could have been prevented had someone tracked Allen while he was on bail to ensure he was complying with his conditions.

1120

Minister, why aren't you tracking those who are out on bail and whether they are complying with their bail conditions?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** First of all, when I hear about such an unfortunate incident, my heart goes out to the family. Domestic violence is a problem, not just in Ontario. It's a real problem that we try to address as a government. In my previous position as the Minister of Community Safety, we did a lot of work because the majority of those in our correctional institutions are there—a lot of them—for domestic violence, so there is a lot of work that is being done.

The bail system in Ontario is a program that has been in place for a long time. To say that someone is out on bail and nobody is following what they're doing is incorrect, because police officers do know who is out on bail and they do follow what they are doing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Minister, the victims aren't looking for sympathy; they're looking for action. Victims must have confidence that when judges set bail conditions there is a process in place to ensure that they will not be re-victimized. Clearly your ministry has failed to do this.

Christopher Husbands was under house arrest when he shot a child in the Eaton Centre. Lascelles Allen bail conditions included no contact with Suraiya Gangaram when he went to her home and killed her.

I will ask you again: For the victims who need to know they will be protected if they report a crime, for the

families trying to protect their children from further victimization, for the public who expect bail conditions to be respected and offenders punished when they are ignored, when will you start tracking offenders released from jail to ensure they comply with their bail conditions?

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Again, this is a tragic incident. I cannot believe how a family that is faced with such a tragic incident—and I'll say that my ministry and the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the women's directorate, we work together and we do everything to make sure that this does not happen.

Again, I'll say that when these people are out on bail, there is a follow-up done by the police. When someone is found to have violated their bail conditions, they are back in jail.

My heart goes to the family. In my ministry and in this government, we'll do everything we can to prevent this from happening.

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier. Speaker, our schools have been thrown into chaos due to more than a decade of chronic underfunding of education in the province. Instead of ensuring that all students with special needs have the services they need, the Premier and her government have cut \$6 million from Toronto schools. Instead of fixing the systemic problem of underfunding, this government chose to cut \$250 million over 2014-15. Speaker, page 230 of their budget outlines it.

Then the Premier and her minister say they are perplexed about the ongoing unrest in the education sector. The Liberal government made this mess. Instead of fixing the problem they are again—recall Bill 115—choosing to legislate instead of negotiate.

Premier, will you recognize the failure of your Minister of Education to get a deal with teachers and fire her immediately?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I really think what we all need to focus on today is the fact that we have heard from the Education Relations Commission that the school year is in jeopardy for 72,000 children, for 72,000 students. What we really need to focus on is, how do we get those kids back in the classrooms and get them there right away?

Now, if we'd had the co-operation of the NDP yesterday, we could have had those kids back in the schools today. Every day we don't get co-operation on speedy passage of the bill is another day that students are out of school.

I remember a day in 2008 when there was a TTC strike, and the NDP, the Conservatives and the Liberals all worked together to pass back-to-work legislation in one day.

We could do that for the 72,000 students who are out of class. We could do that, but we need to work together.

My priority now is to get the kids back in class.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** What the minister should be focusing on is actually trying to negotiate a deal, not legislate.

Back to the Premier: The Premier and her minister have had months to get a deal with teachers that would put students first, and this doesn't mean—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Municipal Affairs.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** —to keep class sizes manageable and doesn't mean a further reduction of services in the classroom. Students and families should not be shouldering the brunt of the cost of Liberal scandals. It's obvious that the minister has failed students and families by not really trying to get a deal with teachers.

Speaker, will the Premier force her minister to take responsibility for making students pay the price of her failings by firing her immediately?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Actually, there are negotiations going on this week. Negotiations do continue, because we believe we should get a negotiated settlement. But sometimes that doesn't work. Sometimes there's a strike.

I think the party opposite needs to remember that when they were the government, they actually asked the ERC for advice three times. Three times the ERC gave jeopardy rulings when they were government.

In the first case, the parties agreed voluntarily to go back to work and to have binding arbitration, which is actually what is in the bill. But in the other two cases, the parties didn't agree to go back to work when there was a jeopardy ruling, the NDP government tabled back-to-work legislation and everybody in the House came together to pass it.

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** My question is for the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure. Since the global downturn, Ontario's economy has not only recovered but is projected to lead the country in economic growth. Since the recession, Ontario has created more than 500,000 jobs—510,200 jobs, to be exact. Nearly 98% of the jobs recovered since the recession are full-time positions, 73% in above-wage industries. In fact, our job recovery rate since the recession is 187%, well outpacing the United States, at 134%. However, youth unemployment rates remain too high, and our government recognizes that.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Could you please explain to this House what is being done to tackle youth unemployment?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** While Ontario's economy remains poised to lead the country in growth this year, and probably next year as well, the fact is that youth unemployment remains far too high. That's why we announced the youth jobs strategy in 2013 that is investing \$295 million over two years to help 30,000 young people from across the province gain necessary job experience.

Since the fall of 2013, more than 26,000 young people have seen opportunities and work experience that they've been able to obtain through this program. However, there's still more work to do. That's why, in this year's budget, we're renewing the youth jobs strategy by providing an additional \$250 million. This will bring our total investment in youth employment programming to more than \$565 million. Through these investments, we're helping our province's youth succeed and get good job experience.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Laura Albanese:** I would like to thank the minister for that answer. I appreciate being part of a government that is making smart, strategic investments to tackle the province's youth unemployment rate. In fact, last week I announced how our government's investments are benefiting some of the youth in my riding of York South–Weston.

Through the Youth Skills Connections Program, \$125,000 is being invested so that youth from the Weston–Mount Dennis area will be able to gain relevant job experience. These young constituents will gain critical employment skills that would allow them to transition into Ontario's job market.

1130

Can the minister please explain how the Youth Skills Connections Program is helping youth across the province to gain the experience they need to succeed?

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** I want to thank the member for the work she's doing in her own community when it comes to some of these youth employment programs, and working with some of her local groups to ensure that the young people in her community get access to these very important programs.

The Youth Skills Connections Program promotes partnerships among business, labour, educators, not-for-profits and youth to identify and solve skills development issues. In the first intake, the Youth Skills Connections Program invested more than \$13 million to support 51 programs across the country. Some 3,400 young people have already received employment training through this program. Currently, the province is investing over \$11 million to launch the second intake of the Youth Skills Connections Program. The second intake will involve 45 programs that will be selected to help young people get the skills and training they need to succeed.

*Interjections.*

**Hon. Brad Duguid:** Rather than heckling on our efforts to provide youth employment opportunities, the opposition should be supporting our budget—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, as a result of 12 years of mismanagement and waste by your government, people are

suffering. Special education is in need of adequate levels of investment; vulnerable children are in need of educational assistants so they have proper support to learn and achieve success in the classroom. This is why no parent and no student in Bluewater District School Board can accept that you're sitting on your hands—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy House leader, second time.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** —as 50 special education EAs are removed from the classroom. Making vulnerable kids pay the price for your mismanagement and waste is wrong and, frankly, it's unconscionable.

Minister, I ask you: How do you justify cutting 50 educational assistants at Bluewater District School Board under your watch as Minister of Education when the number of needy children has not decreased?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Obviously, special education is very important to us. It might interest the member opposite to know that when I was a trustee I served for years on my board's special education advisory committee, so this is actually an area that I feel quite strongly about: special education.

Because we feel very strongly about it—both my predecessor, the Premier, and myself—our special education funding has actually gone up over \$1.1 billion, by 68%, since 2002-03. So we're actually spending \$2.72 billion on special education. That's not a reduced number. The special education funding remains steady, just like all the other areas of the funding model—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Back to the Minister of Education: Here's the truth. Kathy Cotter's seven-year-old daughter is bearing the brunt of your cuts. She has retinal dystrophy and is legally blind. With her EA gone, there will be no one to Braille her books. Candice Huber's eight-year-old son has type 1 diabetes and hypoglycemic episodes. With his EA gone, there will be no one to watch and help keep him safe.

Kathy, Candice and many other parents with children with learning, mental, physical and a myriad of health issues have lost faith in you, your Premier and your government. You're sitting on your hands while blind, autistic and diabetic students are losing the critical school support they need. These students are frustrated, their parents are stressed out and your only answer to them is, "Not true"? Minister, how can you put the Liberal Party's political fortunes ahead of Ontario's vulnerable children?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As I said before, the fortunes of our special needs children are very important to us. In fact, one of the things that we've been doing through the recent labour disruptions is making sure that the most vulnerable children still continue to receive community services.

To go directly to your question, one of the things that has happened in Bluewater, in the board that is in your area, is that the number of children in Bluewater has dramatically decreased. Despite the fact that the enrolment has gone down over the last 10 years, the

funding has actually gone up by 40%. Think about this: The funding has gone up 40%; the number of children in Bluewater has gone down. So the amount of special needs funding in Bluewater—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, my question is to the Premier. The government insists that the Ontario Energy Board will protect Ontarians from higher hydro rates when the Premier sells off Hydro One. It doesn't make any sense.

Now the government is stacking the OEB with people from the energy sector. The government just appointed Paul Pastirik, a former senior VP of Aecon, to the Ontario Energy Board. Aecon shares the mega-contract to refurbish the Darlington nuclear plant with SNC-Lavalin. The Premier is putting the fox in charge of the henhouse.

Is the Premier ready to admit that the OEB isn't going to stand up to a privatized Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Energy Board and all of the crown corporations and agencies have very strict conflict-of-interest regulations. There are a tremendous number of people out there with experience who can contribute, and because they are engaged in the community or engaged in the economy, that should not disintitle them to serve. There are people in this room who declare interest on particular issues that come before this House. It's part of doing business. It's part of government.

Mr. Speaker, the appointments are tremendous appointments, and we recognize the quality and experience of those people.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, again to the Premier: The government also named Victoria Christie to the OEB. She spent 10 years as an electricity industry lobbyist. They've appointed Susan Frank, who spent her career lobbying for higher rates on behalf of Hydro One. The OEB is being turned into a rubber stamp for industry. It's called regulatory capture. It means the regulator gets filled with industry people who are more interested in the industry than in the ratepayers, and it means that if the Premier sells off Hydro One, the OEB won't even be a speed bump in the way of higher rates.

Is the Premier ready to admit that selling Hydro One is going to mean higher hydro bills and that this new OEB won't do anything to stop that?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we know there's a lot of high drama in the question that has been asked.



The answer is quite simple: The board has conflict-of-interest guidelines that the appointees would be required to adhere to. I repeat everything I said in my answer.

Regarding the oversight, the Ontario Energy Board is an independent regulator with a mandate to protect the interests of Ontario ratepayers. They have reviewed applications. For example, in 2010, Hydro One asked for a rate increase for distribution and received a 9% reduction for its capital request. In 2012, Hydro One asked for a rate increase for transmission and received a 3% reduction for its capital request.

Mr. Speaker, the CEO of the Ontario Energy Board was before committee last week. She made a strong case for its independence and for the tremendous improvements in legislation that will be forthcoming to protect the ratepayers in Ontario.

### GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** My question is to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

We're all affected by regulations every day. Whether it's a farmer applying for municipal water access or a renovation permit for a local downtown store, every industry is governed, in part, by regulations.

Ontario's stringent and internationally respected regulatory systems result in standards that are world-class and products that are recognized as safe, effective and top-quality.

At the same time, the agri-food sector faces regulatory-related challenges to the timely introduction of new food products, processes and technologies that keep pace with scientific advancements and the global business environment.

My constituents and people across Ontario recognize the need to develop a robust regulatory environment.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister please inform the House on what our government is going to do to eliminate excessive regulations that make running agri-food businesses—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member for Barrie for that question this morning. She's a great champion of agriculture in the Barrie area.

1140

As Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, I'm committed to building a business climate that encourages the next generation to pursue opportunities in the agri-food sector and that allows producers to earn a living, raise a family and, indeed, contribute to Ontario's economy.

Just recently I hosted an Open for Business forum with leaders of Ontario's agricultural organizations, representing the entire value chain. This was the eighth forum hosted by my ministry and the second since I was named Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Open for Business forums are an excellent opportunity to learn what is working for the industry and where we can collaborate in areas that may need improvement.

Since 2008, Mr. Speaker—an important statistic—Ontario has eliminated 17% of all the regulatory requirements, or 80,000 regulatory burdens. But we also know that there's more work to do. By working together, we'll reduce the regulatory burden for agriculture in Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** Thanks to the minister for his answer. It's great to hear that progress is being made by working together with the agri-food sector. Reducing red tape for farmers in the agri-food sector creates a more competitive environment for businesses while supporting Ontario farm families, and that's good for business.

I know that by bringing together multiple ministries and a wide range of agriculture industry leaders, we can create significant opportunities for improving the productivity and economic impact of our agri-food sector. That's why, as a government, we must continue advocating for our family farmers to ensure that policy is sensitive to their needs.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister update this House on some of the tangible policy outcomes that have been achieved through Open for Business so far?

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I want to thank the member from Barrie for her supplementary. I know she's a regular visitor to farmers' markets in the Barrie area, acquiring that great local food that's grown in Ontario.

In a short time, we've achieved several successes because of work we've done together, including: providing greenhouse operators more options to deal effectively with waste water; streamlining approval for the on-farm anaerobic digester operators; and meat regulation amendments that create a more flexible approach to compliance, clarifying regulatory requirements and promoting competitiveness and innovation for industry without compromising food safety.

We've also made changes to the tax classification for grain elevators that is estimated to save elevator owners \$3 million based on projected 2016 tax rates; and, at the request of the industry, we de-linked the requirement to enrol in AgriStability to participate in Ontario's Risk Management Program.

### EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question this morning is for the Premier. Premier, on the Friday before the Victoria Day long weekend, your government announced the cancellation of an extremely successful program that assists and creates jobs and new businesses in Ontario. The self-employment benefit has existed for 23 years and has outstanding results in Prince Edward and Hastings counties and across the province. Over 400 new businesses have been created in Prince Edward and Hastings counties in the last five years as a result of this program.

Premier, can you explain why your government would kill one of the only tools that it has at its disposal to create jobs in rural Ontario?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member for that question.

Ontario's workforces are our greatest asset. As the Premier keeps saying, our people are our greatest asset. That's why we have been investing heavily in our people in Ontario. Ontario invests \$1.2 billion annually in Employment Ontario's various programs. We serve one million Ontarians every year just to make sure they get the right training so that they can find jobs and contribute to our economy. We remain committed to investing in a range of high-quality programs through Employment Ontario services to various people across the province of Ontario.

In order to deliver the highest quality of training programs, we wanted to streamline the Ontario Self-Employment Benefit. That's why we have been working on it to make sure that Ontarians get the best-quality service from the government.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** I'm not sure I got an answer there, Mr. Speaker. I can smell a late show coming.

Premier, in the last five years, the OSEB has created 424 businesses in my riding alone, hundreds more in Northumberland county, hundreds more in Barrie—right across the province. In my area there's a completion rate alone of 90%. This is a program that was working.

Local economic development officials tell me that roughly 70% of the businesses stay in business well after completing this program.

As hydro rates and new payroll taxes place additional burdens on small businesses, you're making it harder to even become self-employed in Ontario. Premier, why are you killing a program that's clearly an economic success when it's used well, instead of reforming it so that self-employed people across Ontario can have the same success that people in my riding have had? Why are you throwing the baby out with the bathwater with this program?

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank again the member for that question. Our government is committed to ensuring that Ontario's tax dollars are spent in a more responsible way. The reality is that the program, the Ontario Self-Employment Benefit, is a very costly program. Only half of the clients complete the program. That's why we're diverting part of the funding from that program to the Ministry of Economic Development and Infrastructure so that they can invest more on Small Business Enterprise Centres.

We have 57 small enterprise centres across the province of Ontario. Through these centres, small businesses receive the best advice in order to improve their businesses.

The winding down of this program is the right and responsible thing to do.

## PUBLIC TRANSIT

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. This morning we learned two things. First, we

learned that at long last, the government actually knows how to spell "LRT" when it comes to Hamilton. But we also learned the neighbourhoods near Eastgate Square have been shut out of the government's LRT plans.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Neighbourhoods around Eastgate Square have been cut out of the government's plans. These are the same areas that would have benefited greatly from the economic uplift that the LRT would bring, but instead of connecting to these neighbourhoods, the LRT will connect to a traffic circle.

Why did the government break its promise to connect the LRT in Hamilton to Eastgate Square?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Transportation is going to want to comment in the supplementary, but I just want to draw attention to what's happening right now. In the early part of question period, the leader of the third party had nothing to say about funding transit and only wanted to undermine the plan that we have in order to put funding into transit. Now what she wants is she wants more. She wants to fund more transit. She now has a question about the efficacy, the particular route, the investment that's going to be made in Hamilton.

What I would say to the leader of the third party is you can't have it both ways. You've either got to have a way to fund transit or you can't fund it. We have a plan, we're putting that plan in place and because of that, Hamilton is getting an LRT.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated please. Start the clock.

Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** It's really too bad that this generation of Ontarians and all generations going forward have a Premier—the only Premier in the history of Ontario—who hasn't figured out how to keep hydro public and build infrastructure at the same time.

The bottom line is that this LRT isn't even being constructed until 2019, even though it was promised back in 2007. Yet back then, this Premier was the Minister of Transportation. She took \$4 billion out of transit funding that shortened all kinds of projects. Some were cancelled—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Education will come to order. Minister of Energy, come to order, second time.

Please finish.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** As a result of these cuts, other LRT projects in the GTHA, as I mentioned, were either cancelled, deferred, shortened, or had their funding cut.

What guarantee can this Premier offer Hamiltonians that this now very shortened and delayed LRT line will actually begin construction four long years from now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.



1150

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I was delighted to join with the Premier and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing earlier today in the leader of that party's own hometown to announce the landmark historic commitment that our government has made to build an LRT for that community.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Come down to my hometown. Come to Essex.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex is warned.

Carry on.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** The province will cover 100% of the capital costs of building this LRT in Hamilton, which will help grow the economy, reduce travel times and connect people. This LRT will offer speedy service from McMaster University through downtown Hamilton to Queenston circle and will connect directly to the new West Harbour GO station that this government is currently building, which will be open in time for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. The LRT will ultimately extend to Eastgate Square.

This is a clear—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. The Minister of Transportation has learned that when I stand, you sit. If it happens again, you'll be named.

New question.

### CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** My question is for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Minister, I've heard you say many times here in the Legislature that you are committed to the transformation of corrections in our province, but there remain problems at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre such as capacity issues, violence and contraband. In this environment, it could be difficult to rehabilitate inmates and to reduce rates of reoffending.

Ontarians need to see concrete action from you to tackle these very important challenges. Recently, you announced the construction of a regional intermittent centre at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre, and this is designed to house intermittent offenders. This is a very important step in your goal of building safer communities in Ontario.

Could the minister please explain to this House how the construction of a regional intermittent centre is going to address the problems that I've mentioned here?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener Centre for asking a very important question. Our top priority is the safety and security of all our correctional staff and inmates at our facilities. Recently, we began construction on 112-bed regional intermittent centre on the grounds of the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre in London, Ontario.

This new centre builds on the success of the Toronto intermittent centre and is the next step in our strategy for intermittent offenders. These are inmates who are serving

90-day sentences, typically on weekends. Housing intermittent offenders in their own facility will help to alleviate many of the concerns that we are seeing at EMDC. For example, it's an efficient and dedicated way to address capacity pressure by increasing the number of available beds, cutting down on overcrowding and reducing violence.

It also means that inmates at EMDC will no longer need to be regularly moved around to accommodate the influx of those serving weekend sentences.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I'd like to thank the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services for that answer. I know that Ontarians, specifically those who are in southern Ontario, are going to be very happy to hear about this new facility being built at the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre as part of a larger strategy for intermittent offenders.

But when we hear about the issues at the EMDC, it's hard to believe that just building a new facility is the answer. The minister talks about a transformation of corrections and his pledge to build stronger and safer communities, but I'd like to hear more about how this new centre is going to serve the people of southern Ontario and the role that it's going to play in the transformation of corrections.

Could the minister please speak further on how the new regional intermittent centre is going to help ease tensions and transform corrections to build stronger and safer communities in Ontario?

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** First of all, I also want to note that building a separate facility will also prevent contraband from being introduced into the main facility by intermittent offenders who return to their communities during the week. That's an important step to keep our detention centres safe, particularly our correctional staff and other inmates.

The member from Kitchener Centre is absolutely right. Simply building a new facility will not fix the correctional system in Ontario, and this alone cannot build strong and safer communities. But right now we are seeing a revolving door in the correctional system. That is why it is important that we take steps to rehabilitate and reintegrate those in our system: so we can stop the cycle of re-offence.

Part of that, Speaker, is aided by separating lower-risk offenders from more serious offenders, which is exactly what centres like this one will do. We firmly believe that this new centre will help to alleviate pressures and issues at EMDC and have made—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Minister, Blanding's turtle is a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Where it exists in Ontario, it lives in shallow waterways and wetlands, including the Niagara peninsula. They are

uniquely vulnerable to extinction because it takes 20 years before females start to reproduce.

The Ontario courts made the decision recently that set a precedent: When choosing between industrial wind turbines and a threatened species, Blanding's turtle, they sided with the turtle, tossing out a wind farm application. It was the right decision. It was the right thing to do.

My question simply is, if it's right in Prince Edward county, shouldn't we protect the Blanding's turtle environment everywhere in the province of Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** I want to thank the member for the question. Before he concluded, I was gathering my thoughts—and the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change, who I know would love to weigh in on this as well as having a similar thought and lobbied it over to me. He found it, I think, as I did, very interesting that the official opposition is asking a question in this regard.

The member posed a question. He seems to be supportive of what has happened in this case. I would assume that in the supplementary, he's going to come forward with some information that suggests that in another instance the Blanding's turtle did not carry the day. I would assume that's the point of the question that's coming forward. I look forward to hearing exactly what he has to say.

I'm happy to hear that in the first question he was happy that the Endangered Species Act, which we brought into place, actually did have an effect to protect endangered species. I'm happy to hear that you're pleased with the legislation, although I don't think it's legislation that you supported when it was originally introduced into the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I thank the minister for anticipating my question. I just would hope to get a single answer from the minister about how he's going to protect the threatened species in the province.

You got it exactly right: The courts have determined in the decision that steel turbines 500 metres tall cemented in 40 truckloads of concrete in a wetland should lose out to a threatened species, the Blanding's turtle. I agree with that decision; I'm sure you agree with that decision as well.

My point is, Minister, why was it that it was the courts that had to force your hand? Where were you? You're the minister. You need to know your role and play it. You have the lead on the Endangered Species Act in the province of Ontario. Instead of waiting for the courts to intervene in the Niagara peninsula, will you do the right thing? Your choice is between the turtle or more steel. What should be in the wetlands, the endangered species or—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Speaker, with the legislation in place, there is a committee called COSSARO, the Committee on—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's never too late. Finish, please.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Under the legislation—that I don't think the opposition supported and they seem to be loving now—COSSARO stands for the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario. They make a decision on when a species is listed. Once it's listed, it receives protection, and the habitat for the species also receives protection. Through that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Niagara West, I'm standing. You should know that.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Bill Mauro:** Through that process, once the species is listed and the habitat is protected and a project is overlaid on that particular species and its habitat, there is a process in place called overall benefit, where if the contractor or the proponent can come forward and provide a way to accommodate the species—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services on a point of order.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** A late introduction, Speaker, if I may: I notice my very good friend and mentor, Mark Holland, is here from Heart and Stroke. He's been my chair for two elections and he is the federal Liberal candidate in Ajax. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Nickel Belt on a point of order.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** Just a quick introduction also: Michael Perley from the Canadian Cancer Society, as well as all of the other ladies—Joanne Di Nardo—from the cancer society here. They have been pushing for a ban on flavoured tobacco for a very long time.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### POOLED REGISTERED PENSION PLANS ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR LES RÉGIMES DE PENSION AGRÉÉS COLLECTIFS

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 57, An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 57, Loi créant un cadre pour les régimes de pension agréés collectifs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1201 to 1206.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would all members please take their seats.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'll wait.

On May 25, Mr. Sousa moved third reading of Bill 57. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Harris, Michael	Miller, Norm
Anderson, Granville	Hillier, Randy	Moridi, Reza
Arnott, Ted	Hoggarth, Ann	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Hudak, Tim	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Jaczek, Helena	Nicholls, Rick
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jones, Sylvia	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Kiwala, Sophie	Pettapiece, Randy
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Clark, Steve	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Damerla, Dipika	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Walker, Bill
Duguid, Brad	McDonell, Jim	Wilson, Jim
Dunlop, Garfield	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	McMahon, Eleanor	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted	Yakubski, John
Fraser, John	McNaughton, Monte	Yurek, Jeff
Gravelle, Michael	Meilleur, Madeleine	Zimmer, David
Hardeman, Ernie	Milczyn, Peter Z.	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Sattler, Peggy
Bisson, Gilles	Gretzky, Lisa	Singh, Jagmeet
DiNovo, Cheri	Hatfield, Percy	Tabuns, Peter
Fife, Catherine	Horwath, Andrea	Taylor, Monique
Forster, Cindy	Mantha, Michael	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul	
Gates, Wayne	Natyshak, Taras	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 80; the nays are 19.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

## MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 POUR DES CHOIX PLUS SAINS

Deferred vote on the motion that the question now be put on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Projet de loi 45, Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2015 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2015 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** We have a deferred vote on the motion for closure on the motion for third reading of Bill 45.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1210 to 1211.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On May 13, Ms. Damerla moved third reading of Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Mr. Baker has moved that the question be now put. All those in favour of Mr. Baker's motion, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	Gravelle, Michael	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Oraziotti, David
Bradley, James J.	Kiwala, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Qadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Coteau, Michael	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Crack, Grant	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Martins, Cristina	Takhar, Harinder S.
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Thibeault, Glenn
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Meilleur, Madeleine	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Harris, Michael	Natyshak, Taras
Arnott, Ted	Hatfield, Percy	Nicholls, Rick
Bailey, Robert	Hillier, Randy	Pettapiece, Randy
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Sattler, Peggy
Clark, Steve	Hudak, Tim	Singh, Jagmeet
DiNovo, Cheri	Jones, Sylvia	Smith, Todd
Dunlop, Garfield	MacLaren, Jack	Tabuns, Peter
Fedeli, Victor	MacLeod, Lisa	Taylor, Monique
Fife, Catherine	Mantha, Michael	Thompson, Lisa M.
Forster, Cindy	Martow, Gila	Vanthof, John
French, Jennifer K.	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Gates, Wayne	McNaughton, Monte	Wilson, Jim
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Yakubski, John
Gretzky, Lisa	Miller, Paul	Yurek, Jeff
Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia	

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 56; the nays are 44.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Ms. Damerla has moved third reading of Bill 45, An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say “aye.”

All those opposed, say “nay.”

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1215 to 1216.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. Damerla has moved third reading of Bill 45. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Miller, Paul
Anderson, Granville	Gretzky, Lisa	Moridi, Reza
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Baile, Robert	Hatfield, Percy	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Balkissoon, Bas	Horwath, Andrea	Natyshak, Taras
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Nicholls, Rick
Barardinetti, Lorenzo	Hudak, Tim	Oraziotti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hunter, Mitzie	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Jones, Sylvia	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwaia, Sophie	Rinaldi, Lou
Clark, Steve	Kwinter, Monte	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sattler, Peggy
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Singh, Jagmeet
Del Duca, Steven	MacLaren, Jack	Smith, Todd
Delaney, Bob	MacLeod, Lisa	Sousa, Charles
Dhillon, Vic	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Dickson, Joe	Mantha, Michael	Takhar, Harinder S.
DiNovo, Cheri	Martins, Cristina	Taylor, Monique
Dong, Han	Martow, Gila	Thibeault, Glenn
Duguid, Brad	Matthews, Deborah	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Garfield	Mauro, Bill	Vanthof, John
Fedeli, Victor	McDonell, Jim	Vernile, Daiene
Fife, Catherine	McGarry, Kathryn	Walker, Bill
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	Wilson, Jim
Forster, Cindy	McMeekin, Ted	Wong, Soo
Fraser, John	McNaughton, Monte	Wynne, Kathleen O.
French, Jennifer K.	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yakabuski, John
Gates, Wayne	Milczyn, Peter Z.	Yurek, Jeff
Gélinas, France	Miller, Norm	Zimmer, David

#### Nays

Hillier, Randy

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 99; the nays are 1.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There being no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1219 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** Speaker, I ask your indulgence, as I have a number of guests here in the gallery today from the Ukrainian-Canadian community. They'll be joining us at 4 o'clock for a reception as well.

And I beg the indulgence of the guests in case I miss anyone, but I hope I have all your names correctly.

We have with us Chrystyna Bidiak, Nadia Gereliouk, Stepan Horlatsch, Mihajlo Hucman, Daria Luciwi, Mykola Lytvyn, Roman Medyk, Irka Mycak, Borys Mykhaylets, Marta Olynyk, Anna Romanyshyn, Oleh Romanyshyn, Lesia Shust, Halyna Vynnyk, Krystina Waler, George Yakovitch, Sonia Holiad, Daria Diakowsky, Victor Hetmanczuk, Alexandra Hetmanczuk, Marie Setnyk, Ana Semotiuk and Bozhena Gembatiuk-Fedyana. Thank you all for joining us.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### MIKE TOTH

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate a constituent of mine, Dr. Mike Toth, on becoming the new president of the Ontario Medical Association. Dr. Toth brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his role representing Ontario's 28,000 doctors.

Dr. Toth is a family physician who lives and has practised for the past 30 years in Aylmer, a small town in my riding of Elgin–Middlesex–London. In addition to his busy schedule, Dr. Toth is the medical director of a long-term-care facility and a member of the medical advisory committee at the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital.

As a family physician in a small town, Dr. Toth has had the privilege of treating a range of ages and a variety of ailments. His youngest patients are newborns, while his oldest patients are over 100 years old. He's extremely proud to represent his colleagues as president of the Ontario Medical Association.

Dr. Toth will be the 134th president of the OMA, as he takes over from Dr. Ved Tandan, whom we thank for his service.

Mr. Speaker, I know that Dr. Toth is excited about the year ahead. In addition to his many OMA-focused initiatives, he would like to see this government come back to the table to work with doctors to continue to provide the health care system that Ontarians deserve and want.

On behalf of the PC Party of Ontario, my colleagues and especially my constituents from Elgin–Middlesex–London, I would like to wish Dr. Toth all the best in his new role. We are proud of him. Congratulations.

### MINING FATALITY

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I would like to take this time to inform the House of a tragedy that happened in my riding on the weekend.



On Sunday, May 24, 2015, tragedy struck at the St. Andrew Goldfields Holt Mine, near Matheson, Ontario. Alexie Dallaire-Vincent was fatally injured in an underground rail accident. Alexie was only 22. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family, her friends and her co-workers at the Holt Mine.

Alexie lived in the village of Virginiatown, where the entire community is mourning the loss of one of their own. The people of Virginiatown, the surrounding towns of Kirkland Lake and Larder Lake, and the Wahgoshig First Nation in Matheson have a rich mining heritage, but they well know the dangers of working in a mine.

Miners are proud. We have miners here. Miners are a proud people. We are looking for the results of the investigation. Mining has become much safer, but with each accident we look to hopefully improve safety to have fewer and fewer accidents and hopefully, someday, eliminate fatalities.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Alexie's family this afternoon.

#### NELSON MANDELA

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I am pleased to rise today and speak about a special event that took place in Toronto earlier this month. Recently, I joined Mayor John Tory, the consul general of South Africa, the Nelson Mandela Legacy Committee and students from Nelson Mandela Park Public School to rededicate a stretch of University Avenue as Nelson Mandela Boulevard.

For those of you who may not know, the naming of this street has important roots. During a visit in 1990, a few months after he'd been released from prison, Mandela led a march along University Avenue from city hall to Queen's Park. He gave a passionate speech in front of thousands of people.

The timing of this naming ceremony coincided with the anniversary of Mandela's installation as President of South Africa in 1994. It was inspiring to see so many people of different backgrounds and ages gather together to honour one of my personal heroes. It was also touching to hear students from Nelson Mandela Park Public School share some of their stories about the impact that Mandela has had on their lives.

We have made great strides in promoting diversity in Ontario. We must continue to work together to eradicate discrimination and inequality in all of its forms. This ceremony was a powerful reminder of the achievements of a great man and of our commitment to building a more inclusive society.

Together, we will all walk on Nelson Mandela Boulevard and make this a stronger province for all of us.

#### HOLODOMOR

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Last year, I had the solemn privilege of taking part in the Holodomor commemoration events to honour the victims of the famine in Ukraine, now recognized as a genocidal famine by Canada and 70 other governments worldwide.

This horrendous crime against humanity happened 83 years ago when Joseph Stalin and his henchmen orchestrated severe rationing, seized all grain and finally locked all borders to stop starving Ukrainians from searching for food elsewhere. I've read that during that year, 17 people were dying per minute, with one third of them being children. Although we may never be able to exact the true loss of life of the Holodomor, it is estimated the total demographic losses could stand as high as 10 million people.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to recognize you for your work and efforts in bringing awareness about the Holodomor to Queen's Park, as well as many MPPs from all three parties for their support in shedding light on this forgotten chapter in world history.

We are now tasked with ensuring that our young generation is educated and informed about the mistakes of the past, and that these mistakes be their reminder of the need to always remain vigilant in defence of freedom and human rights.

On behalf of our 350,000 Ukrainian friends and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, I ask the House to stand here today to commemorate the Holodomor, to continue to honour the victims of this horrific tragedy and to remember those who survived.

#### POLICE CARDING PRACTICES

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Today I rise to address the issuing of carding. Carding is the procedure or process by which police officers stop individuals, question them and collect that information. Most often these individuals are not under specific investigation. They are not arrested, nor are they eventually charged. This is simply an attempt to collect information.

In fact, what makes this such a horrible process is that it targets racialized people. A 2013 report indicated that of all the people carded in Toronto, 25% were black, even though black people make up only 8.5% of the population. This is a specific targeting of racialized people. The Law Union points out that both black and brown people are specifically targeted, and they are made to feel unwelcome in society.

Desmond Cole wrote a very telling article and shared his experiences of being stopped numerous times, and how that impacts one's sense of feeling and belonging in society—how it negatively impacts that.

I myself have experienced carding. I have been stopped numerous times. I assure you I was not doing anything wrong whatsoever. I was stopped while I was riding my bike. I was stopped while walking down the street. It is a practice that the Canadian Civil Liberties Association has denounced, demanding its end.

I stand here today in the House calling on this government to put forward a provincial policy on this practice—to end this practice. This is a violation not only of our human rights, our charter rights, but our fundamental freedoms. It's something that must be ended.

## BURLINGTON'S BEST AWARDS

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** I am pleased to stand in this House today and thank and recognize some outstanding citizens in my community of Burlington. On May 14, I had the pleasure to attend the Burlington's Best Awards, an annual celebration in my riding to honour our community's most outstanding citizens.

### 1510

This year's awards featured seven winners from among 22 nominees. All were extraordinary, but I'd like to highlight in particular the contributions of this year's citizen of the year, Ron Foxcroft.

Best known as the inventor of the Fox 40 pealess whistle, Ron is a prominent local entrepreneur and philanthropist. More recently, he's become known to many as the man who mobilized Burlington after last year's devastating flood. On August 4, 2014, in a matter of hours 200 millimetres of rain fell on our city. Thousands of families were left looking for help as they tried to salvage their belongings, clean up the mess and repair their homes and their lives. In all, over 3,000 homes were impacted.

It was Ron's genuine compassion and dedication to his community that compelled him to say yes when asked by Burlington Community Foundation CEO Colleen Mulholland to chair the Burlington flood disaster relief committee, a role to which he devoted over 650 hours of volunteer time.

Within 100 days, Ron was instrumental in raising \$905,000 from the community for families in need. I'm proud to say this amount was matched two-to-one by the Ontario government. As a result, a total of \$2.7 million was made available to support flood victims and their families.

Acting as a key spokesperson for the campaign, Ron played a major role in keeping flood relief efforts going in the media throughout the months that followed. But he did not stop there. He picked up the phone and persuaded donors to contribute, and he led a committee of dedicated volunteers who helped adjudicate and process hundreds of claims.

It was a privilege to work alongside Ron during Burlington's time of crisis and need. Our community is richer because of him and all of the volunteers and folks nominated. Our city is stronger because of all of them.

My sincere congratulations to Ron and all of the winners and nominees of this year's Burlington's Best Awards.

## THE PITT

**Mr. Toby Barrett:** On any given night the population of the rural hamlet of La Salette is nearly doubled as children, teens and adults gather at The Pitt. The Pitt is a basement where local martial arts coaches Mike Hill and Greg Rockefeller are creating active, strong competitors through kick-boxing. Their equipment is used—it's minimal—and yet they effectively train.

For some, it's a place to escape the schoolyard bully and deal with anxiety in a safe, positive environment; for others it's a place to get the adrenaline pumping and discover new muscles. Regardless, students leave The Pitt proud and simply can't wait to return.

My executive assistant, Bobbi Ann, is one of those students. She calls The Pitt home and the other students her family.

Recently, a group of these students of various ages entered the World Karate and Kickboxing Commission provincial qualifiers. As a result, The Pitt earned the right to compete over the holiday weekend at the nationals in Ottawa. This group brought back gold, silver and bronze. Next stop is Orlando in November for the world championships.

In order to now compete globally they need better equipment, uniforms and some help with travel expenses.

It's truly a story of the little engine that could, and I would ask anyone inspired by these accomplishments to help them get to Orlando to represent Canada on the world stage.

## HEMOCHROMATOSIS

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'm pleased to rise today, representing my riding of Newmarket–Aurora, to recognize May as national Hemochromatosis Awareness Month. Hemochromatosis is the most common genetic disorder affecting one in 300 Canadians—that's about 40,000 Ontarians. Hemochromatosis causes the body to store excess iron which can become toxic.

This national awareness month provides a valuable opportunity to raise awareness of this common disorder, which is frequently not diagnosed.

People with hemochromatosis absorb four times more iron from their daily diet than the average person. The body cannot rid itself of this extra iron and it accumulates over time in critical organs and joints. Left untreated, too much iron can increase the risk of diabetes, heart problems, liver cirrhosis, depression, infertility, cancer and other conditions. Too much iron can be fatal.

Despite hemochromatosis being the most common genetic disorder in Canada, few people or doctors know about it. The good news is treatment is relatively simple, rarely requires drugs and involves monitoring iron levels through routine blood testing and donating blood on a regular basis.

New technologies such as the app Iron Tracker make it easy for people with hemochromatosis to monitor their health. The app has been downloaded from the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society website thousands of times and is being used by people in 38 countries around the world.

Generating awareness in Ontario about the importance of screening for early detection is crucial to ensuring early diagnosis and effective treatment. Awareness is the cure.



## HOLODOMOR

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** We have a number of guests from the Ukrainian Canadian community here today, and I'd like to speak about the Holodomor.

Mr. Speaker, the Holodomor was a genocide that occurred in 1932 and 1933 in Ukraine. It was perpetrated by Joseph Stalin when he closed Ukraine's borders and confiscated grain. He did so to destroy the Ukrainian population that was opposed to his rule. That's the same freedom and independence that the people of Ukraine are fighting for today. During that time 17 people per minute, 1,000 per hour and 25,000 per day were dying of famine. The world was silent and millions died as a result.

In the gallery today we have two survivors of the Holodomor. My grandmother was a survivor of the Holodomor. She once told me that she hoped that the victims of the Holodomor would not only be remembered but honoured. "Honoured" means not just remembering and commemorating, but learning from our mistakes as a global community and taking the steps to make sure something like this never happens again. That is why it is so important that young people in Ontario learn about the Holodomor.

That's why I'm so proud to stand here today with leaders of the Ukrainian Canadian community who worked towards that goal for so long, with you, Mr. Speaker, and other members of the Legislature who co-sponsored a bill to recognize the Holodomor; and with our Premier and our Minister of Education, who have ensured that the Holodomor will be in the Ontario curriculum so that every young person learns about the Holodomor.

Today, I hope we take this opportunity to commemorate and remember, but also redouble our efforts to ensure that a tragedy like this, a tragedy like the one that's happening in Ukraine right now, never happens again.

Let us do as my grandmother would have asked, as all of the survivors and victims would ask if they were here today: Let us remember the victims. Let us commemorate the victims. Let us honour them.

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order, the member from Etobicoke Centre.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I'd like to extend my apologies. There were a number of guests who I didn't introduce. As soon as I sat down after introducing a number of folks, I realized there were a number who weren't on my list.

I'd like to apologize to those of you and I hope I have you all.

We have in the gallery with us a few more guests I'd like to introduce. We have Oksana Rewa, who is up at the top there, Oksana Struk, Theodore Pucak, Stephen Ostafichuk, Mary Szkambara, Andrey Genyk-Berezowsky, Walter Kish, Tamara Ivanochko, Daria Diakowsky, Ariadna Ochrymovych, Ludmilla Holo-

wacki, Bohdan Holowacki, Nina Bulska, Marta Baziuk, Tatiana Dzulynsky, Yuriy Kus, Larisa Kus, Irene Mycak, Alex Sidnyk, Andrew Gregorovich and John Moskalyk. To the others I have missed I apologize, but we look forward to introducing you at the reception at 4 o'clock. Thank you.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Newmarket-Aurora on a point of order.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I would just like to acknowledge members of the Canadian Hemochromatosis Society who joined us just before I gave the member's statement. We have Ian Hilley from King City, Simone Hilley Bland, Kay Easun, Marta McIlroy, Ian-Patrick McAllister, Professor Gary Grewal, Andrew D'Angelo, Cara Worthington and Jane Nimigon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

It is now time for reports by committees.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON SOCIAL POLICY

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Social Policy and move its adoption.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care / Projet de loi 80, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario et la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche en ce qui concerne la possession et l'élevage d'épaulards ainsi que les exigences administratives relatives aux soins dispensés aux animaux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted. Agreed? Agreed. Carried.

*Report adopted.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to the orders of the House dated April 22, 2015, April 30, 2015, and May 6, 2015, the bill is ordered for third reading.

1520

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

NIAGARA CENTRAL  
DOROTHY RUNGELING  
AIRPORT ACT, 2015

Mr. Hudak moved first reading of the following bill:  
Bill Pr20, An Act to amend The Welland-Port Colborne Airport Act, 1976.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

#### WEICHE ESTATES INC ACT, 2015

Mrs. McGarry moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr21, An Act to revive Weiche Estates Inc.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

#### UNIVERSITÉ DE L'ONTARIO FRANÇAIS ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'UNIVERSITÉ DE L'ONTARIO FRANÇAIS

M<sup>me</sup> Gélinas propose la première lecture du projet de loi suivant :

Bill 104, An Act to establish the Université de l'Ontario français / Projet de loi 104, Loi constituant l'Université de l'Ontario français.

**Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac):** M<sup>me</sup> Gélinas propose qu'il soit permis de déposer un projet de loi intitulé An Act to establish the Université de l'Ontario français, and that it now be read for the first time.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas: La langue française joue en Ontario un rôle historique et honorable depuis plus de quatre siècles. La Constitution reconnaît au français le statut de langue officielle et le français est reconnu en Ontario comme une langue officielle devant les tribunaux et dans l'éducation. De plus, la Constitution reconnaît à la communauté franco-ontarienne le droit à la gestion scolaire, et cette communauté gère déjà un réseau de 450 écoles primaires et secondaires, 12 conseils scolaires et deux collèges communautaires. Les Ontariens et Ontariennes d'expression française n'ont cependant, pour l'instant, que l'accès à un nombre limité de programmes universitaires en français.

L'Assemblée législative reconnaît l'apport du patrimoine culturel des francophones à l'Ontario et désire le sauvegarder pour les générations à venir. Le projet de loi constitue l'Université de l'Ontario français, dont la mission spéciale est d'offrir une gamme complète de grades et de programmes universitaires en français, et d'offrir aux étudiants francophones l'occasion de suivre

tous leurs cours universitaires et de faire toutes leurs études dans cette langue.

Merci beaucoup, monsieur le Président.

### MOTIONS

#### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Bradley moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

Does the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1525 to 1530.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Everyone take their seats, please. Thank you.

Mr. Bradley has moved that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Tuesday, May 26, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Hardeman, Ernie	Moridi, Reza
Anderson, Granville	Hoggarth, Ann	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Hoskins, Eric	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hudak, Tim	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Miltzie	Nicholls, Rick
Barrett, Toby	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Kiwala, Sophie	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bradley, James J.	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Chiarelli, Bob	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Clark, Steve	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Smith, Todd
Crack, Grant	Martins, Cristina	Sousa, Charles
Damerla, Dipika	Martow, Gila	Thibault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiane
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Wilson, Jim
Dickson, Joe	McDonnell, Jim	Wong, Soo
Dong, Han	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Duguid, Brad	McMahon, Eleanor	Yakabuski, John
Dunlop, Garfield	McMeekin, Ted	Yurek, Jeff
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McNaughton, Monte	Zimmer, David
Fraser, John	Meilleur, Madeleine	
Gravelle, Michael	Milczyn, Peter Z.	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras
Bisson, Gilles	Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy
French, Jennifer K.	Hatfield, Percy	Vanthof, John
Gates, Wayne	Mantha, Michael	



**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):**

The ayes are 64; the nays are 11.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas household electricity bills have skyrocketed by 56% and electricity rates have tripled as a result of the Liberal government’s mismanagement of the energy sector;

“Whereas the billion-dollar gas plant scandal, wasteful and unaccountable spending at Ontario Power Generation and the unaffordable subsidies in the Green Energy Act will result in electricity bills climbing by another 35% by 2017 and 45% by 2020;

“Whereas the soaring cost of electricity is straining family budgets, particularly in rural Ontario, and hurting the ability of manufacturers and small businesses in the province to compete and create new jobs; and

“Whereas home heating and electricity are essential for families in rural Ontario who cannot afford to continue footing the bill for the government’s mismanagement;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to immediately implement policies ensuring Ontario’s power consumers, including families, farmers, and employers, have affordable and reliable electricity.”

I agree with this, will sign it and send it to the table with page Katie.

### TEACHERS’ LABOUR DISPUTES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I had the great surprise today to receive this petition signed by 2,600 students on strike from the Rainbow board, and it reads as follows:

“Whereas Ontario teachers in three different regions have been striking for over four weeks;

“Whereas there is now” back-to-work legislation in place;

“Whereas this legislation takes away our teachers’ right to strike;

“Whereas in the name of helping students, I believe in negotiation and the right to strike;

“Whereas we are the province’s future workers and voters and will remember the effects of this strike;”

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to (1) stop the back-to-work legislation and (2) ask the government to “focus on making meaningful strides in negotiations with the OSSTF.”

That comes from 2,600 young people in my riding. I support it and give it to page Robert.

### TERRY FOX DAY

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas on March 26, Bill 61, the Terry Fox Day Act, passed second reading with unanimous support from the Ontario Legislature;

“Whereas if passed at third reading before the Legislature rises in June, Bill 61 will proclaim the second Sunday after Labour Day in 2015, September 20, as Ontario’s first Terry Fox Day;

“Whereas the second Sunday after Labour Day is the day on which the Terry Fox Run is traditionally held, and September 20, 2015, marks its 35th anniversary;

“Whereas on November 27, 2014, Terry Fox’s home province of British Columbia passed similar legislation proclaiming this same day as Terry Fox Day starting this year;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislative Assembly move quickly to pass Bill 61 at third reading before the end of the current session, ensuring that on September 20, 2015, Ontarians can celebrate Terry Fox Day.”

I fully support the petition and will give my petition to page Dale.

### LANDFILL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas many of the resources of this planet are finite and are necessary to sustain both life and quality of life for future generations;

“Whereas the disposal of resources in landfills creates environmental hazards which have significant human and financial costs;

“Whereas all levels of government are elected to guarantee their constituents’ physical, financial, emotional and mental well-being;

“Whereas the health risks to the community and watershed increase in direct relationship to the proximity of any landfill site;

“Whereas the placement of a landfill in a limestone quarry has been shown to be detrimental;

“Whereas the placement of a landfill in the headwaters of multiple highly vulnerable aquifers is detrimental;

“Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, humbly petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To implement a moratorium in Oxford county, Ontario, on any future landfill construction or approval until such time as a full and comprehensive review of alternatives has been completed which would examine best practices in other jurisdictions around the world;

“That this review of alternatives would give particular emphasis to (a) practices which involve the total recycling or composting of all products currently destined for landfill sites in Ontario and (b) the production of goods

which can be practically and efficiently recycled or reused so as to not require disposal.”

Thank you very much for the time to present this petition. I shall affix my signature, as I agree with it.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario titled “Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

“Whereas once you privatize hydro, there’s no return; and

“We’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“We’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“We’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I fully agree with this petition. I’m going to sign my name to it and give it to Robert to bring up to the desk.

#### EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** What a pleasure to be recognized in this House. I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas a growing number of Ontarians are concerned about the growth in low-wage, part-time, casual, temporary and insecure employment; and

“Whereas too many workers are not protected by the minimum standards outlined in existing employment and labour laws; and

“Whereas the Ontario government is currently engaging in a public consultation to review and improve employment and labour laws in the province;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to implement a decent work agenda by making sure that Ontario’s labour and employment laws:

“—require all workers be paid a uniform, provincial minimum wage regardless of a worker’s age, job or sector of employment;

“—promote full-time, permanent work with adequate hours for all those who choose it;

“—ensure part-time, temporary, casual and contract workers receive the same pay and benefits as their full-time, permanent counterparts;

“—provide at least seven (7) days of paid sick leave each year;

“—support job security for workers when companies or contracts change ownership;

“—prevent employers from downloading their responsibilities for minimum standards onto temp agencies, subcontractors or the workers themselves;

“—extend minimum protections to all workers by eliminating exemptions to the laws;

“—protect workers who stand up for their rights;

“—offer proactive enforcement of laws, supported by adequate public staffing and meaningful penalties for employers who violate the law;

“—make it easier for workers to join unions; and

“—require a \$15 minimum wage for all workers.”

I have great empathy for this petition. I sign my name and leave it with page Jany.

1540

#### PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKERS

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas personal support workers are the largest group of unregulated health care workers in Canada; and

“Whereas PSWs take care of society’s most vulnerable citizens including seniors in long-term care, home care, hospitals and retirement homes, and adults with disabilities in supportive housing; and

“Whereas there is an increasing demand for PSWs and they are a key component of a sustainable health care system; and

“Whereas PSWs do not have a set scope of practice, standards of practice or curriculum; and

“Whereas PSWs are left to perform one of the most important jobs in health care without proper tools;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To designate personal support workers as a regulated health profession and enact according legislation.”

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Kerry.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

“Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

“Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

“Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015



shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

"Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

I sign my signature and deliver it to page Sheila.

### STUDENT SAFETY

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there are no mandatory requirements for teachers and school volunteers to have completed CPR training in Ontario;

"Whereas the primary responsibility for the care and safety of students rests with each school board and its employees;

"Whereas the safety of children in elementary schools in Ontario should be paramount;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To work in conjunction with all Ontario school boards to ensure that adequate CPR training is available to school employees and volunteers."

Speaker, I agree with the petition, affix my name and give it to page Julien.

### AIR QUALITY

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's an oldie but a goodie.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario's Drive Clean Program was implemented only as a temporary measure to reduce high levels of vehicle emissions and smog; and

"Whereas vehicle emissions have declined so significantly from 1998 to 2010 that they are no longer among the major domestic contributors of smog in Ontario; and"

"Whereas the overwhelming majority of reductions in vehicle emissions were, in fact, the result of factors other than the Drive Clean program, such as tighter manufacturing standards for emission-control technologies; and

"Whereas from 1999 to 2010 the percentage of vehicles that failed emissions testing under the Drive Clean program steadily declined from 16% to 5%; and

"Whereas the environment minister has ignored advances in technology and introduced a new, computer-

ized emissions test that is less reliable and prone to error; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test no longer assesses tailpipe emissions, but instead scans the on-board diagnostics systems of vehicles, which already perform a series of continuous and periodic emissions checks; and

"Whereas the new Drive Clean test has caused the failure rate to double in less than two months as a result of technical problems with the new emissions testing method; and

"Whereas this new emissions test has caused numerous false 'fails', which have resulted in the overcharging of testing fees for Ontario drivers and car dealerships, thereby causing unwarranted economic hardship and stress;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly as follows:

"That the Minister of the Environment must take immediate steps to begin phasing out the Drive Clean program."

I will sign this and send it to the table with page Dale.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I have a petition that reads,

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I agree with the petition, will affix my name to it and send it to the Clerks' table through page Emma.

### CREDIT UNIONS

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that is addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support over 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario’s economy and create jobs in three ways:

—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;  
 —show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries.”

I agree with this petition. I’m going to affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Sheila.

## TAXATION

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

“Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn’t necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart meter program that failed to conserve energy, and almost \$700 more per household annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

“Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

“Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

“Whereas this uncompetitive tax will not impact businesses outside of Ontario and will only serve to accelerate the demise of our once strong manufacturing sector; and

“Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“To abandon the idea of yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses.”

I agree with this petition and will be passing it on to page Luke.

1550

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROTECTING THE SCHOOL YEAR ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE

Mr. Flynn moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the

Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l’Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Mr. Flynn.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I’ll be sharing my time this afternoon with the Minister of Education.

Speaker, I’d like to start speaking to the proposed legislation we have before us today and outline how I think it will accomplish its purpose.

The Protecting the School Year Act would, if passed, end the labour disruptions at the secondary schools of the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District School Board and the Peel District School Board. These disruptions have put students’ education and their school year in jeopardy, as was recently determined by the Education Relations Commission. It should be obvious by now to all members in this House that the time to act on this issue is now.

We must be aware that the most profound negative aspects of these labour disputes have very severe implications on those who are not directly involved in it. That, of course, is the students. They have no control over the course of this dispute. We in this House, must ensure that these students’ studies are not put at risk by the continuation of these strikes. We must get them back to class. They know they are the ones most affected by this dispute, yet they are unable to do anything about it. They are looking to all members of this House for assistance.

The Education Relations Commission has consulted the affected parties in this regard, and they’ve concluded that there’s no early prospect of a settlement of the local agreements in each of the three school boards that are listed—certainly none that can likely be achieved within sufficient time to avoid jeopardizing the school year of the affected students. In one board, I think they’ve been out for over six weeks now.

As responsible legislators, we have no choice. We must act as soon as possible, and we must act because it’s necessary to protect the interests of these students. The continuation of this dispute and the resulting disruption in education and its corresponding effects give rise to very serious public interest concerns.

But I want to outline exactly how the proposed legislation would work. A lot’s been said about the legislation, some of it accurate, some of it simply inaccurate.

The act would terminate any lockout or any strike involving members of the secondary school teachers’ bargaining unit at the Durham, Rainbow and Peel school boards. The boards would then be required to resume normal operations of the school. The employees would be required to report for work and perform their duties as soon as the act is in force.

The act would prohibit both parties from engaging in any further strike or any further lockout in connection with the current round of local negotiations—emphasis on the local, Speaker.



While we fully expect all parties to comply if the act is passed, a failure to do so would constitute an offence which is punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000 for an individual and up to \$25,000 for a school board or for the union. Each day of non-compliance in this regard would constitute a separate offence.

Any strike or any lockout in contravention of the act would also constitute an illegal strike or lockout under the Labour Relations Act for the province of Ontario. This would then put the issue under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, which is a quasi-judicial body with significant enforcement remedies in the case of illegal strikes or lockouts.

If the respective school boards and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation have not resolved the local issues in dispute before the day that the act receives royal assent, all outstanding local issues would immediately be referred to fair and balanced binding mediation and arbitration. The school boards and the OSSTF would have five days to appoint a member to the board of arbitration. If either party failed to appoint a member within those five days, as Minister of Labour, I would appoint one upon request of either party.

Within 10 days of the appointment of the second member, the two members would then appoint a third member to be the chair of the board. If they fail to do so, they must notify my office. If they notify my office in this regard, we would then appoint the chair.

The board of arbitration would be required to begin the mediation-arbitration proceedings within 30 days of appointment and must make an award within 120 days of appointment. Throughout that time, the parties will continue to have the opportunity to work on outstanding issues with the support of the mediator and the arbitrator panel. If they cannot work those issues out in 120 days with the assistance of the panel, then the panel will provide a decision. That decision, the arbitration award, would address all matters in dispute that are necessary to reach a memorandum of settlement on local terms. In making the award, the board of arbitration would be required to take into consideration certain criteria. That includes the employers' ability to pay, for example, and the economic situation here in the province of Ontario. The school boards and the OSSTF would be also required to share the cost of the mediation and the arbitration process.

We respect collective bargaining in this province. I want to assure the members that nothing in this act would prohibit the boards and the union from continuing to bargain today. In fact, we encourage them to do so. If they resolve their issues in dispute, they would then be required to inform the mediator-arbitrator, and the mediation-arbitration process would be terminated.

We believe it would be best for the parties to reach an agreement themselves and achieve a quick ending to the labour negotiations. We want school boards and their employees to be able to negotiate fair and reasonable contracts, but this absolutely must be done without jeopardizing the education of students.

Like parents, the government does not want children's education further disrupted because of an ongoing dispute. We want Ontario students to benefit from their time in the classroom with their teachers so they can fulfill their potential and learn in one of the best education systems in the entire world. We have, in my opinion, some of the best teachers in the world here in the province of Ontario.

Negotiations are tough by nature, and they're supposed to be tough. Collective agreements are achieved in Ontario, with tough negotiations, in over 97% of cases. That's why we're continuing to put students first by introducing the proposed Protecting the School Year Act. That's why I believe all members of Legislative Assembly should support this legislation.

Speaker, I want to thank you for the time. I would urge all members of the House to pass this bill as soon as possible.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Continuing along, I recognize the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I rise today to speak on behalf of Ontario students and their families, and in support of the proposed Protecting the School Year Act. Our decision to introduce legislation has not been taken lightly. We have tremendous respect for the importance and professionalism of teachers, just as we also respect the collective bargaining process.

The proposed act is, both in its spirit and writing, a legislative tool designed to ensure tens of thousands of Ontario secondary students are back in classrooms so that they can complete their studies and move on to the next chapter in their education. So while we greatly respect teachers and their right to strike, the time has come for our government to balance this respect with the increasing needs of students—and the expectations of parents and taxpayers—so that students can return to school and complete their studies.

As you know, on May 15, our government asked for advice from the Education Relations Commission, the ERC, on whether the strike action in the Durham, Rainbow and Peel district school boards by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation had placed the school year for students at risk in those boards.

**1600**

When we asked the ERC for an advisement, our government was concerned about a number of issues that would put the students' school year at risk, including, for example, the loss of significant time in grade 12 for students preparing for first-year university courses, particularly in engineering and maths and science, where we know that when those students go on, a gap in their grade 12 learning can seriously impact the continuity and the expectation in their first-year engineering or science courses.

We are also concerned about students in grade 10 who may have only completed one of the mandatory half-credit courses in civics or careers prior to a strike. For example, in Durham, if the half-credit started about mid-April—the strike started on April 20—there would be

very little of the content of that half-credit that has been covered by the student, and of course the impact on students with special education needs, who in general are more dependent on their teachers and are less able to compensate for a loss in instructional time.

Yesterday, the Education Relations Commission—the ERC—advised our government that after weeks of strikes by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, secondary school students in the Durham, Rainbow and Peel school boards are in jeopardy of losing their school year.

The ERC has been part of the school board collective bargaining landscape for over 40 years. When teachers were given the right to strike, the ERC was created to balance the right to strike with the right of students. I'd like to read some of the ERC's advisement and give you a sense of what the ERC said in their advice to me.

This is the ERC speaking: "The commission sees the teachers' constitutional right to strike as balanced by the public interest expressed in the act that students' courses of study be capable of completion. In other words, the act places teachers' right to strike between that of those who have a complete right to strike and those who work within essential services (such as police, firefighters and hospital staff), whose right to strike is replaced by interest arbitration. Rather than providing a fixed period of time during which a strike will be protected"—that is, the right to strike—"the ERC is the mechanism to appraise when the public interest in the right to strike should yield to the public interest of ensuring that students have a fair opportunity to complete their courses of study."

There's been a lot of comment over the last few days about who the ERC are and what their role is, so that outlines who they are and what their role is.

They then went on to say, "We have considered the circumstances of each of the three school boards separately. We have consulted the affected parties and we have concluded that there is no early prospect of a settlement of the local agreements in each of the three school boards, certainly none that can likely be achieved within sufficient time to avoid jeopardizing the school year of the affected students. We have noted that the duration of the strike in each of the three school boards is different (Durham the longest, then Rainbow, then Peel), but the impact of each of the strikes is such that, for the reasons expressed in the request," by my deputy, "the teachers' return to work is necessary to ensure that the students can endeavour to complete their courses of study. Our advice is therefore that, in our opinion, the successful completion of courses of study of the affected students in each of the affected school boards is in jeopardy."

They then go on to describe that if back-to-work legislation is going to happen, which is the most normal occurrence following a jeopardy advisement, in that event we would need to replace the right to strike with another mechanism, which is binding arbitration. The Minister of Labour has fully explained how that replace-

ment mechanism for the right to strike is actually captured in this back-to-work bill.

So the ERC's advice is, in fact, in accord with our own assessment and the assessment of 72,000 students and their parents, who have increasingly made their voices heard.

We respect our teachers and their right to strike, but this is about our government prioritizing, above all else, the needs of our students so that they can return to school to complete their studies. With the advice from the ERC, our government is taking the difficult but necessary step to introduce legislation which precisely follows the ERC advice to ensure that students are back in the classrooms quickly, because they are in jeopardy of falling behind their peers, of being delayed in their advancement to the next grade or even to post-secondary education and training in the workforce.

The ERC's advisement was important to our decision-making process, but it was not the only voice that influenced this course of action. Other voices have also been important: the voice of students, the voice of parents, the voice of communities across Durham, Peel and the Sudbury areas. These voices were also heard by our government and helped inform our decision to introduce legislation to protect the school year, to prioritize students' education.

The need for urgent action in the affected school boards is persuasive. As of this moment, more than 22,000 Durham school board students have been out of school for 26 instructional days, and about 7,500 of those students are in grade 12. Almost 5,500 students in the Sudbury area have lost 21 instructional days, and about 2,000 of those students are in grade 12. And more than 45,000 Peel students have fallen behind by 16 instructional days, and nearly 10,000 of those students are in grade 12.

The students have shown tremendous resilience, and they have been eagerly awaiting a resolution to this situation. The students are keenly aware of their teachers' right to strike, but subjecting students to further undermining of the quality of their education is wrong and is something we cannot ask of our young people. It's time to get students back into class so that they can complete their school year. Ontario students deserve and expect a world-class education system. They deserve to advance to the next grade based on their merits, and they deserve to graduate to the next stage in their life, be it college, university, apprenticeship or the workplace.

To ensure that students get everything they deserve out of the school year, our government has taken the difficult but necessary step to introduce the proposed Protecting the School Year Act. I call on all members of this House to stand united with us to quickly pass this act and get our students back to school. They deserve nothing less.

Of course, students and parents are obviously not the only parties affected by the proposed legislation. Supporting student achievement and well-being is our government's foremost priority. Ultimately, the striking



teachers and their federations will be directly impacted by the outcome of this act. I would like to take a moment to address them specifically, and in doing so, I hope to send a clear message to all our education partners.

Despite the challenges of this round of bargaining, despite the tensions and the rhetoric, we will get through this together, because we do have a shared commitment to student achievement and well-being.

By introducing the Protecting the School Year Act in order to get students back into the classroom, our government continues to respect and value the important work that all teachers do every day in our schools across the province. I know that teachers want their students to succeed and achieve to the best of their abilities. We share this aspiration and recognize that the time to act is now. This proposed Protecting the School Year Act is about getting students back in the classroom and continuing their education.

By introducing this act, we have not compromised teachers' bargaining positions in the central negotiations or the right to strike in those central negotiations. In fact, it has no impact on local negotiations at any of the other boards.

1610

Teachers have exercised their right to strike for weeks. During that time, just as we have heard the voices of students and parents, we've also heard the voices of teachers. We will continue to listen to teachers at the central bargaining table and through our ongoing partnerships, but now is the time to listen to the voice of students and to address their needs.

We've proven in the past that we are able to work through difficult issues with all of our partners. I remain committed to continuing to do so. After all, we know it is teachers who are the ones who are going above and beyond to ensure students' success and well-being. It is that very depth of professionalism among teachers that has led Ontario's publicly funded education system to where it is today: one of the best in the world.

For over a decade now, our partnership with teachers has delivered important, measurable results. For example, at the secondary level in 2014, 84% of students graduated from high school. That's up from 68%, and it means that 163,000 more students have graduated than would have if the graduating rate had remained at the 2004 level. These are important achievements for which we owe a debt of gratitude to our teachers, because we know that we have worked with the teachers to elevate our graduation rate.

In elevating our publicly funded education system to one of the best in the world, we have placed on ourselves the greatest burden an educator and an education system can be tasked with: the expectation that we will keep doing better.

Working with teachers, we have made a commitment to students, parents and Ontarians that we will do better, that we will take our publicly funded education system from great to excellent. That promise was codified in Achieving Excellence, our new vision for education in Ontario. At the core of our mission, alongside the success

and well-being of every student and child, is our collective commitment to cultivate and continuously develop a high-quality teaching profession, realizing that commitment and continuing to work closely together in the best interests of students is what awaits us on the other side of the collective bargaining process.

Our education sector has a bright future, but today we are focused on the immediate needs of thousands of secondary students. The proposed legislation is for them. It's not to thwart our partnership with teachers or to undermine their right to strike, but it is the right thing to do at the right time to get students back into the classroom and back on track with their lives. We, however, do remain committed to reaching a negotiated settlement with OSSTF at the central table.

I understand that local boards are equally committed to reaching local agreements in the other school boards. So what we have to do now is to protect the school year. To do that, I need all of your help. If we are going to end this strike now, if we're going to get kids back in the classroom now, if we're going to do this quickly, I need the support of each and every member of this Legislature to act quickly and to get the students back into class.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank the minister for her very flowery words. She's just brimming with optimism here today. Look, we're here because we want to see our students back in school too. Unfortunately, they've been out for six weeks. And unfortunately, when I read this bill, this bill is only going to address the challenges in three boards. There are 72 boards across this province. So I hope that we're not going to go through this another 20 times or so in order to address the problems all across the province of Ontario that you people have created. You've created chaos in the education sector because of your mismanagement. But we are going to be here. The minister said you need our help. We're going to give you our help, because our students deserve it. We're here to help the students. We're not here because we really want to help you get out of the mess you've created, but we do share one thing with you, and that is that the most important thing is that our students get back to class as quickly as possible.

Our education critic, Garfield Dunlop, the member for Simcoe North, will be talking here shortly, and I'm sure that he will be reiterating our position as a caucus. But as one member who—I no longer have children in the school system, but I have grandchildren in the school system. None of them are in the boards that are on strike right now but, based on the failure of this government, they could be on strike at some time in the future.

So they've got their problems. They've got this Bill 122 that is a real dog's breakfast. They need to not only work on this back-to-work legislation; they need to clean up the mess that they created with Bill 122, because until we have a better way of working to ensure that our students aren't caught up in the crossfire between a teachers' union and a board or the central bargaining unit, we're going to continue to have problems. We've

got a lot of things to solve here. We are going to help you on this one, Minister.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I can't say I'm really happy to be debating this particular motion, because it's a sad commentary that this mess has come to this. This government does need to fix their own problems that they have created. Having students and families and teachers all divided isn't really helping the issue.

This minister—today, our leader asked the Premier, if she's not effectively doing the work, if maybe she should step aside and let someone fill her shoes in there and get back to that table and negotiate and not legislate.

I know there are some teachers on that side, and there are some teachers on this side, and everybody's got family and students who go to school. This made of this be fixed by this Liberal government. They need to get serious about negotiating. They need to take the interests of families, students and teachers to heart and stop these political games and the chaos that they've made of this system. These things are something that they have to be responsible for as a government.

You have a majority government now; you're responsible for this. Fix it. Get back to the table and negotiate in good faith. Negotiate, don't legislate. Legislation isn't, obviously, a solution to this problem. You made the mess. You've got people up in arms—families and students and teachers. You need somebody to get in there and get back to the table and negotiate in good faith and make sure there's an effective way to get over this.

I just want to put that out there, that we do have to make sure that this gets resolved, but it needs to be resolved at the level where people can talk it through.

Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I'm happy to be able to rise to speak to this, especially since we're talking about 5,500 students from my riding in Sudbury who have been out for 21 days.

One of the things that I know we all did last week was spend a lot of time in our ridings. There were many events that we all go to as MPPs. I saw this one young woman kind of eyeing me out of the corner of a room. She looked a little nervous and a little apprehensive at first, but she found the courage to be able to come up and speak to me. She wanted to talk to me about what she wants to do with her life. She was very excited to talk to me about climate change, because that's what she wants to go to school for. She wants to be able to get a degree in the environmental services area. So we were talking about climate change and about other things, and one thing she said to me was that she was really concerned that the students were being overlooked in all of this, that there was going to be finger pointing from one side to the other.

1620

From the mouth of babes, so to speak—when you have a young woman saying, “I really want to get back to

school.” I think the ERC decision yesterday really put the nail on the head with that because they are not letting the students' year be jeopardized.

I know the minister has talked about it in depth, about how the teachers have their constitutional right to strike. That is so important. We've seen that over the last little bit, and we've been encouraging them to try and get some resolution. But when I had that young woman speaking to me, it really drove home what we need to do as MPPs: make sure that this young woman can actually go to university. I think the ERC decision is the most important decision that we've heard out of this right now.

I hope the board and the teachers get back to work negotiating as soon as possible, because that would be the best way to do it. That's something we've talked about all along. But I'm very happy to see that the ERC, right now, is talking about protecting the year for the students.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I'm pleased to have this opportunity to respond briefly to the presentation that was made by the Minister of Labour as well as the Minister of Education this afternoon in support of Bill 103, which would have the effect of ending the teacher strikes that are currently taking place in the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and create a system of binding arbitration to resolve the disputes.

Before the teachers went out, I sent out a public message via Twitter. I said that all sides involved in the negotiation process needed to remember one thing: that is, no one wins in a teachers' strike, and it's the students who lose out. Students who have lost five or six weeks of school, especially high school kids—my own son Phillip is in grade 12, and he's looking forward to going to university in September. He wasn't directly affected. But this isn't about him; this is about the many thousands of students who are in grade 12, in high school, who wanted to continue their education over the course of this second term, hopefully finish up their school year in June and then get summer work so that they can afford to pay for their tuition when they go off to college or university—those who are not going directly into the work world.

Clearly, we have to find a better solution to this problem. The government's approach with the two-tiered negotiating process—I think the government would have to admit that it has not worked out as the government would have expected and hoped. I think that we need to take another hard look at the overall negotiation framework.

For my part, I support this bill today. I wish that it didn't have to come to this. Obviously, it has taken many, many weeks.

As many members know, my wife, Lisa, is a public school teacher; she has taught for more than 25 years. I know a lot of teachers, her colleagues, socially. The fact is, the vast majority of teachers just want to teach. I think that the union leadership needs to understand that better, too.



I hope we can pass this bill as soon as possible and get those students back to the classrooms.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the Minister of Labour for final comments.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like to thank the members from Wellington–Halton Hills, London–Fanshawe, Sudbury and Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke for the remarks that they brought to the debate that we're having today.

I think it's important to remember that the track record of Ontario over the years has been that, in about 98% of cases where collective agreements are involved, they are reached at the table. I think we have to look back at the history of all three parties: All three parties in this House, at some point in their history, have decided to introduce back-to-work legislation for a variety of reasons.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Surely not the NDP.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** The NDP, the Conservatives and ourselves, Speaker—all of us have had to do that.

We also have to remember that this is a dispute between the school boards and the local unions. It's not a dispute between the central bargaining people and the government of Ontario. It's between the school boards and the local unions.

As much as the NDP might wish that was not so, it is so. So in this case, we haven't had that agreement between the local boards and the local unions. A strike has deprived both the teachers and the students of six weeks of education.

Now with the firm opinion in hand that the Education Relations Commission has given us that these students' school year is in jeopardy, how can you sit on your hands and not support this bill? How can you allow those children to be out of school when the will of the House is simply that they be in school?

Speaker, it's incumbent upon us as a Legislature, as MPPs from three different parties here, to implement an alternative system. The strike system has not worked. It has led to six weeks of students being out of school. The mediation-arbitration system is being made available to both parties. The idea is that they can use that system to reach local agreements in both Durham, Peel and Rainbow.

I implore all members of the House to support this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 103, the Protecting the School Year Act, 2015. I want to say right up front, Mr. Speaker, that Patrick Brown and the PC caucus will be reluctantly supporting this piece of legislation, and I say "reluctantly."

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Why? Well, we know right off the bat that there are 72,000 secondary school students out of—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Mr. Speaker, if I can just say something: I didn't heckle at all when you folks were

speaking, and I expect the same courtesy. This is very serious business here.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I haven't been heckling.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** No, but there has been heckling on the other side.

This is a very serious piece of legislation. We have 72,000 students out of school right now. In Durham, that works out to 600,000 student school days. In Rainbow, it's 105,000 school days and, in Peel, already 700,000 lost school days. In some ways, that saves the government money. No one is bringing that up; right? But that's a total of 1.4 million school days that we've lost already.

Many of those students are in grade 12, and they are going on to university, college and trades. They have careers ahead of them. We simply cannot sit back and have that in jeopardy. In fact, our caucus has been asking for weeks now to take action more quickly because of the importance of this and the importance of the school year, the graduation ceremonies, all the activities that take place—proms etc. It's very important that we deal with that.

I've been critic since last June. It's one of the most amazing jobs I've ever had here at Queen's Park. I've had the education portfolio and the training, colleges and universities portfolio, and I've put a lot of effort into it. One of the efforts I've made a great deal of headway on is in stakeholder relations. I've met with, I would say, 50% of the stakeholders—I've had meetings with them—in the education and training, colleges and universities field since I've been the critic. It's an amazing job, and there are some wonderful people in it.

One of the things I've learned in dealing with people like President Paul Elliott and with Paul Kossta, who is here every day—I think we've gained a lot of respect for each other's opinions on different topics, and there's certainly also a trust factor. One of the things I found out is that these negotiations—this Bill 122 two-tiered bargaining system is a complete flop. There have to be changes made to that. Why do I say that? What's happening is, at each end there's no bargaining taking place. It doesn't matter who you talk to—if you talk to people from the school boards—and it was interesting just now that the Minister of Labour is blaming the school boards and the unions for not negotiating and somehow making the Ministry of Education and Kathleen Wynne—none of their responsibility. Of course it's their responsibility. She's responsible for the \$22-billion budget. She's also responsible for the cuts that have taken place. We know that.

What we're finding out with the two-tiered bargaining system is, first of all, they're trying to break up a lot of the collective agreements that have been made. Why don't they just admit that? That is actually happening. If you talk to the trustees, if you talk to the people who are members of the administration on the school boards, if you talk to the union people, they'll all tell you that that is what's happening.

I know that the teachers aren't asking for a lot more money. That's not what they're asking for. They're just

trying to protect what they have in place. So at least admit what the issues are.

As the critic here—we get to hear very, very little. Liz Sandals's office doesn't call me up and say, "You know what? Here's what's happening today."

Sorry.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me. I'd like to just remind the member that when we're referring to other members, please refer to them, if they're a minister, as "Minister," if it's Premier Wynne or however; not just by first and last name. Thank you.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My apologies. I know Minister Sandals is the MPP for Guelph, and I apologize for that. Sometimes I get speaking too quickly and I forget, okay? So I apologize for that.

1630

The reality is that the negotiations are going nowhere. You can bring in arbitration, you can bring in conciliation and all that sort of thing. Nothing is happening. Three of the 72 boards are out on strike. All we're doing today is putting a finger in a dam.

I understand the third party is going to debate this till 1 o'clock in the morning if they have to, or they're going to continue on to fight the back-to-work legislation. However, we cannot, on behalf of the—

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Parents.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Particularly the 150 emails I received today from parents and students in the Peel and Durham boards—I have to say we have to support the bill, reluctantly, and then we have to deal with what's happening next.

What's happening? This all started last September 1 when negotiations were to take place on this two-tiered bargaining system. Well, nothing really happened. Nothing at all happened at either end, either at the provincial negotiations or at the board level, until the teachers, the OSSTF in Durham, finally said, "We've got to walk. We've got to go on strike." That's what happened. So nothing happened.

But today in the scrum, the Minister of Education said—they were saying, "What's going to happen in the fall?" She said, "We've got three months to figure that out." That's 14 weeks right now. They got nothing done from September to May and now in 14 weeks magic is going to happen.

What is actually happening? That's the problem. What will happen? I know what's going to happen. OECTA will be out. The English Catholic teachers will be out by probably—there's a really good chance they'll be out by September 1. The two francophone boards, the Catholic boards, the public boards will be out. There are 12 of those boards altogether. The remaining groups—the elementary teachers' federation, they're already on—

**Interjection:** Work-to-rule.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** —work-to-rule for administrative duties. They can step that up at any given time.

We have turmoil, Mr. Speaker. That's what's happening here. You've got the summer and everybody's going to want a few weeks off, including the people

under negotiations. What's going to happen on September 1? We don't get back here until about September 10.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Chaos, more.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** We're going to have more chaos unless some kind of a miracle happens. The only miracle I can see happening is for the government to take responsibility. Take those 1,000 people who work over there at the Ministry of Education and find a better system. It shouldn't be up to the third party and it shouldn't be up to the official opposition to come up with a system that will work so the government can be saved.

We're saving them today. What we're doing today is, we're going to help them get this bill passed as quickly as possible, to get those 72,000 students back in the classroom. That's our prime concern right now. We're doing this very, very reluctantly because I can tell you this has been the worst—we call it a disaster—two-tiered bargaining disaster we've ever imagined.

The government that claims they're so wonderful in education—Dalton McGuinty was the education Premier and all this kind of thing. You know what? Give me a break. Everything's come home to roost right now. The problems are here. Twelve years of fiscal mismanagement has allowed the province to get into a debt of a billion dollars a month. They have no money. Now, of course, they're going to take it out on anybody they possibly can. Health care cuts, education cuts; those are the two major areas they're going to cut, unless, of course, they can blame someone else.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, they're good at that.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Surely they'll find a way to blame Stephen Harper. That's got to be the first guy. You always blame Stephen Harper.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** John Robarts.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Then you go to John Robarts and—

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** Bill Davis.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** —Bill Davis and go back as far as Sir John A. Macdonald. If there's a Conservative on the planet, they'll find that guy to blame before they'll actually take the responsibility themselves. That's what I'm imagining, what I'm saying here today.

We're not going to put up a lot of speakers on this thing. We'll do the questions and comments. We want this bill passed immediately. We want those students back in the classroom. We want the teachers to grab some of the time they've had to be able to help those students at graduations and proms, and then get those young men and women out there getting jobs as they get careers at colleges or universities or trades, because you know what? We need people working in Ontario to pay some of the debt off that these guys have accumulated over here.

I can go on for a long time. I know you like to hear me speak, Mr. Speaker, because I don't read those long notes.

The reality is we that have a problem in education, a serious, serious problem. I don't know how, even after—say the bill is passed by Wednesday or Thursday, I don't



know how we're going to correct this mess by September 1, when our students go back to class. That includes these young men and women who are pages here today.

Everyone in this room probably has some kind of an interest in education. Whether you have a child or a grandchild in the school system, or a spouse who may be a teacher, a son or daughter who is a teacher, a mother or a father, we all have a stake in this. This is very, very important. We've got to get this thing right.

I can only say, again, on behalf of Patrick Brown, our new leader—we are excited to have him. He's been well organized already.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Well, you know what? I can tell how excited you are to have him. I could tell the day he spoke when the Premier of Quebec was here. You were so humiliated, you couldn't believe what was happening. He was humiliating you with your own facts. The Liberal Party tried to take away the enthusiasm of our new leader, elected a couple of days before, by bringing in the Premier of Quebec—and God only knows why they brought him in—and it backfired on them. They can heckle us all they want. I'm very proud to see that Patrick Brown is our new leader and I can tell you right now, he will do a wonderful job. In 2018, he's going to be sitting right over there, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Comments and questions? The member from Welland—Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It's in that area, Speaker, somewhere in that area.

First of all, I think we should change the name of Bill 103 to the "attack the teachers act." I think that might be something you might want to look at.

How did we get here? I think that's important. The Liberals created the crisis with the school boards, make no mistake about it. The Minister of Education really set up what's going on right across the province of Ontario when she stood up and said that teachers wanted to go on strike. Think about that. I don't know of any teacher—and I'm going to give you some background on how I know teachers—who I've ever met or talked to who ever said, "I want to go on strike." So I think they kind of set up the bargaining process.

I kind of look like I know a little bit about the teaching profession. My daughter Chantel is a teacher. She goes to school at 7:30 in the morning, comes home at 5, 6 o'clock at night, marks papers, works extremely hard. My daughter Tara works in the special-needs education sector. My wife is a teacher of 30 years, and do you know what she did for the last five years that she was teaching? They had a breakfast club because the school that she had—there were a lot of single moms, single dads, low income. So every morning they had a breakfast club that started at 7:45, and guess who was there every single day for the breakfast clubs? Those same teachers, those same teachers who care about their kids.

I've gone out socially with teachers. My good friend Mr. Bradley from St. Catharines knows that. When you

go out with teachers, it's one of the most boring nights in history. It's true. What do the teachers talk about? They talk about their kids. They talk about little Johnny. If you ask them the score in a hockey game, they have no clue. They just keep talking about little Johnny.

That's all the time I have; I'm sorry.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Hon. Michael Gravelle:** Clearly, this is a decision to move forward with this legislation that has not been taken lightly. When you have the Education Relations Commission, after, obviously, some real consideration, recognizing that the year is in jeopardy for the students in Durham, Sudbury and Peel, and the fact that they may not be able to successfully complete the school year, this kind of action needs to be taken. It's not action that any government wishes to take. It certainly continues to leave the opportunity for a positive collective bargaining opportunity, and I think that's really, really important.

I stand here as well, as my colleagues who have already spoken have, recognizing the extraordinary work that our teachers are doing all across the province of Ontario. Minister Sandals indicated the significant increase in graduation rates, which is so important. That's been part of the partnership that we've seen between the teachers of our province, the educators and our government working together in a positive way. But this is a challenge, particularly for those students who have been affected in Durham, Sudbury and Peel. There needs to be an opportunity for them to complete their school year.

1640

We've come together in the past in this chamber to support back-to-work legislation. We've come together, all three parties agreeing to it, and obviously we're not in that situation today. But again, this is something that I think is extremely important. Immediate action was needed. This is something that we feel strongly about, recognizing how difficult it is in terms of an atmosphere, but co-operation is still extremely important. We want to see that happen. But it's important, I believe, that all parties of this Legislature allow the opportunity for students to get back to school.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's a pleasure to join the debate this afternoon on Bill 103. I'd like to congratulate our critic on education and post-secondary education, the member for York-Simcoe, who has been doing a fantastic job since taking over the portfolio—Simcoe North; sorry—since last June.

I recall, though, that our previous education critic and I were on the committee that studied Bill 122—Rob Leone from Cambridge when he was here. At that time, we had a lot of difficulty with Bill 122. We were debating it continuously at the committee level and talking about the fact that this two-tiered system wasn't going to work. Professor Leone—as he is now known—had some really good information as to why this system wasn't going to work. However, the government of the

day and the third party and all of the big unions really wanted to rush this through. They wanted to get this done, and they actually time-allocated Bill 122 and had the vote here in the Legislature. This was going to solve all of the problems that we were seeing and bargaining in our education system. Clearly, now that we've had a sober second look at how this is working, it's not working.

As the member from Simcoe North spoke very passionately about, we have to fix this situation. We have to fix Bill 122. He talked about the fact that we're sticking a finger in the dam right now. We're putting a Band-Aid on something that is going to erupt in the fall. We know it is going to erupt in the fall. This government, though, won't admit that they're the ones that caused the problem. I know we have a member on our side who always says, "When you mess up, fess up." This government isn't doing it. They need to fess up, admit that they made a mistake and fix the problem.

But right now, we're going to help this government out and get these three school boards back in the classroom so that the kids can get back to school, hopefully on Friday morning.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Let me say that no one in this House wants to see the school year in any jeopardy for the students. No one. But on the other hand, the Liberal government has created a mess. Now they're throwing it across the aisle and saying, "Help us out. It's up to you. You have to help us save face here." They had all the time in the world to bargain; they didn't bargain.

Speaker, I know you're not allowed to bring props in here, but I thought the education minister should have had a wash basin and some soap, because she's washing her hands of any responsibility that she thinks she doesn't have because of the situation she created. The Liberals have created a situation that has caused great chaos—a crisis in education. They're looking across the aisle and saying, "Help us out."

No one is going to jeopardize the school year, but there is democracy at stake. You need to be told what's wrong with the system if you're ever going to fix the system. The way you hear those arguments is, you listen to debate. That's why there's no unanimous consent. You have to be told what you're doing wrong if you ever expect the system to be fixed.

Nobody in this House wants to jeopardize the school year for students in Ontario. That's not going to happen. They have the votes, they have the support—they don't even need the support; they have their own votes. By Thursday, they can pass the bill, after they go through the process of allowing other people, other voices—we heard earlier today about students in the Rainbow board, 2,600, who petitioned, saying, "Don't legislate the teachers back. Negotiate with them. Come up with a fair deal." That's from their own students, 2,600 students in Nickel Belt, in the Rainbow board. There are other voices that have to be heard.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Simcoe North for final comments.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I'd like to thank the member from Welland, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, the member from Prince Edward-Hastings and the member from Windsor-Tecumseh for their comments.

I also want to thank the member from Nickel Belt for bringing forward the private member's bill on the francophone university. I actually did a notice of motion back in November on that as well. I'm just going to read what it says: "That, in the opinion of this House, the government of Ontario and its Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities should take steps toward the establishment of a French-language university to be established in the Greater Toronto Area." I filed that back in November. I'll be onside with her on that because with the 700,000 francophones in Ontario and the fact we have English-language universities in Quebec, I think it's fair that, someday, we actually make that happen here in Ontario.

But in the end, I wanted to sum up the fact that, again, our party will be supporting Bill 103. I say that again, and we say it reluctantly. I hear the comments coming from the third party. I completely understand where they're coming from. The reality is that every day now, I think, is important. We wouldn't have been asking those questions for the last five weeks if we didn't think the young men and women should be in the classroom.

I've actually visited a number of the picket lines. I think we've had a good understanding of what the problems are. I just go right back to what the main problem is: It's Bill 122. Bill 122 is flawed. There need to be changes made to that so that we're not going to have turmoil in the education system next fall.

I want to thank my caucus members. I want to thank our new leader, Patrick Brown, for the support on this. I think it's safe to say that we'll be supporting this bill as fast as it can go through. Again, we're not putting up speakers, just doing questions and comments. But the reality is that we want those young 72,000 students who are out of the classroom now back in the classroom so that they can graduate and have their proms and all the things that young men and women do as they go towards graduating and into college and university.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Today I rise to speak to Bill 103, the Protecting School Year Act, 2015. Put very simply, this bill legislates education workers at the secondary level in Durham, Sudbury, Manitoulin and the Peel region back to work for the remainder of the 2014-15 year.

I'll be leading the debate on behalf of my caucus and speaking for an hour this afternoon. I could talk a lot longer than that because I was a public school board trustee. I still have kids in our public education system, and I understand the importance of public education. I know first-hand what the Liberals' mismanagement of education has done to our public education system.



That being said, I think the debate on this bill deserves several hours. In fact, the topic of legislating terms of work for teachers is an issue that has been before this Legislature before. Not too long ago, a Liberal government under then-Premier Dalton McGuinty tabled Bill 115, legislating terms of work for teachers, stomping on the collective bargaining process and stifling the voices of the professionals working in our classrooms and those of elected school board trustees.

While the Liberals paid lip service to creating a collaborative environment for collective bargaining to take place, the bill before this Legislature makes it clear that they are more interested in legislating teachers back to work than fostering collaborations, much like what we saw in the McGuinty years with Bill 115.

While the Minister of Education and the Liberal government have utterly failed students and families in all aspects of the education file, they continue to skirt responsibility for the chaos that they are causing in our schools. From cuts to school closures to their inability to work collaboratively now with our education workers, this government has failed Ontarians.

Today I've got a chance to debate the culmination of Liberal failures on the education file, Bill 103. Rather than accept accountability for the mess that they made in our education system, the Liberals are skirting responsibility. Rather than focusing time and attention to negotiate with education workers, the government dragged their heels on the file and is now attempting to force teachers back to work. Rather than fulfill its commitment to create the conditions for smooth negotiations, the Liberal government is forcing teachers back to work.

1650

An examination of these past few months helps us understand what the Premier had in mind when she committed to open and collaborative negotiations with education workers, all in the best interests of Ontario families. In March of this year, the government announced major cuts to the Grants for Student Needs funding allocation. The GSN funding envelope provides the bulk of funding for education in Ontario. This year, the government made across-the-board cuts to the funding envelope.

Ontario families were appalled to learn that 38 school boards will see less funding for special education next year. I'd like to reiterate: 38 boards received less funding for special education, regardless of what the minister likes to say. This includes over \$6 million in special education cuts in Toronto alone. Across the province there will be \$36 million less in funding for textbooks, classroom supplies and in-classroom supports.

Yes, our education Premier was quick to show Ontarians what she meant when she claimed to be committed to improving education in this province.

Along with announcing these colossal cuts to education funding, the government also changed the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline. The Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline, also known as PARG, outlines the standardized province-wide process by which local school boards conduct reviews to determine the

future of local schools. The Liberals cut the number of public meetings required before a school can be closed and created a loophole where no consultations will be done by a community committee. These changes restrict community input on school closure decisions.

The concern here is that this is a government that closed over 88 schools across the province between 2011 and 2014. Ontario families are worried that their good neighbourhood schools will be closed. These are the schools that are woven into the fabric of the community. The closure of these schools ripples across the neighbourhoods that house them.

Along with cuts to education and forcing the closure of neighbourhood schools across the province, this government is forcing boards to shed staff. We're losing qualified, dedicated and professional education workers across the province from Windsor to Peterborough and to the Bruce-Grey area. In fact, today in question period we heard that the Bluewater board will also be losing some staff.

Let's recap: Since March, the government has made historic funding cuts to education, specifically targeting special education funding at 38 school boards across the province; taken measures to reduce public consultation in the process of school closures; and forced dedicated education workers out of a job.

Throwing our education system into chaos is no easy task. But given the actions of this government over the past few months, you can't say they aren't trying their hardest. Parents and families across the province have a right to be frustrated with this government's constant failure in our education system. Ontarians know that broken Liberal promises, cuts and forced school closures created this mess in our education system. The government's refusal to overturn any of their ill-conceived cuts or admit that they are even cutting education funding perpetuates the chaos in our schools. What I find most troubling is that all of this was done by a Premier who claims to have cut her teeth on education issues. Given all the cuts, Ontarians are now seeing how sharp those teeth really are.

After breaking promises made just 11 months ago, cutting education funding and forcing school closures, this government began what they refer to as negotiating with our educational workers. Here is the result: Secondary students at public schools have been out of the classroom in Durham since April 20, in northern Ontario's Rainbow District School Board since April 27 and in Peel region since May 4. In Ottawa-Carleton and Halton, secondary students will not receive comments for learning skills on their report cards, along with several other administrative functions that will be reviewed. Combined, over 100,000 secondary students in our public education system are impacted.

In our public elementary schools, 76,000 education workers across the province are undertaking an administrative strike, omitting comments from report cards and not undertaking any administrative obligations. Today, we learned that this job action will be increased as of June 1 and throughout the summer.

Education workers in the Catholic system at both the elementary and secondary levels voted overwhelmingly in favour of a strike.

With students out of class and chaos in our schools, Ontario's students and families should be able to look to their government for leadership and direction. Instead, the Premier and Minister of Education denied all their ill-conceived cuts to education and blamed local boards and trustees for school closures that were forced by shortfalls in government funding.

When dedicated education workers and parents showed up at the minister's office to voice their concerns with the government's failures on the education file, the Minister of Education actually went as far as to say that she has had protests outside of her office before, in the last election, and she seems to have gotten re-elected.

Understandably, Ontarians demanded answers for the chaos in our schools, but when they asked the government for answers, the Minister of Education went as far as to claim that she found this situation "perplexing."

Families in Ontario want leadership from their government. Leadership is grounded in taking responsibility and defending your actions. While it was this government that threw our schools into chaos, they are now attempting to make up for their shortcomings on the backs of hard-working education workers, parents and students in Ontario.

This morning I called on the Premier to fire her Minister of Education. It's time for this government to accept accountability for the chaos they caused in our schools. Ontarians deserve a Minister of Education who can work collectively with professionals, who stands by commitments made to keep class sizes manageable, and, at the very least, actually admits when hundreds of millions of dollars are cut from education funding.

Ontarians deserve a Minister of Education who accepts responsibility for ill-conceived cuts to education. In fact, Ontarians deserve better than a minister who proposes short-sighted cuts and then walks away when things go wrong. Instead of bringing people together to get a deal done, the Minister of Education blamed teachers, blamed boards of education and drove the sides apart.

The minister was given a job to do, and her failure to work collaboratively with educators falls solely at her feet. As a result, and because of her continued failure to serve Ontario families, the Premier should fire her minister immediately, before her Liberal government rams through legislation to force education workers back to work in an attempt to quiet the outrage she has caused in our education sector.

I will say again that the Premier must fire the minister and encourage all sides back to the bargaining table immediately. Respectful, collaborative collective negotiations are the only way to ensure long-term stability in our education system. The bill up for debate today is not the answer.

The purpose of the bill being debated today, the Protecting the School Year Act, is simple, yet its impact

will be cited for years to come. The bill legislates striking public and secondary school teachers in Durham, Rainbow and Peel back to work for the duration of the 2014-15 school year. Rather than working collectively to negotiate a fair deal with education workers, the Liberals have demonstrated once again that they would rather legislate than negotiate.

Back-to-work legislation demonstrates that the Minister of Education and Premier have failed to bring people together and resolve the issues and chaos in our schools, whether the government will admit this or not.

This legislation does nothing to fix the actual problems. Students may be going back to class, but what quality of classroom are they returning to? Let's remember that it's this Liberal government that cut \$248 million from education in 2014-15, forced the closure of good neighbourhood schools and handed out pink slips to our dedicated education workers.

The government threw our education system into chaos and, like everything else, Ontario families are now paying the price. It's clear that the Liberal government does not respect teachers, families or students. This government went from wanting a fair, negotiated deal last week to ramming through back-to-work legislation today.

The remainder of my remarks today are going to focus on how we got here. How did a government that touted itself as a stark contrast to the Harris era cause Harris-era labour unrest? How does a government that imposed contracts on teachers through Bill 115, repealed this bill and promised a better way forward, think that it's acceptable to legislate teachers back to work? How arrogant is a government that won't admit to their role in making a mess of our education system but asks for the unanimous consent of this Legislature to cover their inability to work with education workers and keep their promises to families?

1700

No, we did not support a unanimous consent motion on this bill. We will force this government to defend its actions. They created this mess in our education system. It's their ill-conceived cuts to education that are throwing our schools into chaos, and it's their inability to take responsibility for their actions that see so many of our students missing class.

Maybe, just maybe, through the course of the debate, this government will actually show Ontarians a hint of contrition. Maybe they'll admit that underfunding education is a mistake and that forcing neighbourhood schools to close is not in the best interests of Ontarians.

Speaker, it starts with firing the Minister of Education and getting all sides back to the bargaining table. Unfortunately, this Liberal government has done little to show that they are ready to own up to their actions, and the bill before us today proves it.

As I stated in the introduction, the bill before us today, Bill 103, forces teachers back to work and circumvents the collective bargaining process that this government set up so that they won't have to take these actions.



Bill 103 deals specifically with secondary school teachers currently on strike in the public boards of Durham, Rainbow and Peel districts. This bill requires the termination of any strike or lockout and provides a mechanism for achieving a memoranda of settlement of local terms. The scope of the bill is limited to these three boards and applies to the 2014-15 school year.

This bill is made up of several components. As I've stated, there is the back-to-work component, which ends work stoppage at the three boards or any strike action at these boards. The bill goes on to state that the parties would be prohibited from beginning any new strike or lockout in connection with the current round of local bargaining. The act would also prohibit strikes and lockouts by the employees and school boards in respect to central bargaining for the remainder of the 2014-15 school year. Terms and conditions of employment with respect to local matters that existed as of the day before the first day the work stoppage became lawful are to continue to apply until there is a settlement of local issues, unless both parties agree otherwise. Any administrative strikes, such as a work-to-rule mandate, would also likely be prohibited by these three locals under this act.

Bill 103 includes an enforcement component, with failure to comply resulting in a \$2,000-per-day fine for individuals and a \$25,000-per-day fine for the union. There are also dispute resolution components outlining that all outstanding local matters in dispute would be referred to mediation-arbitration. Local parties would have the opportunity to appoint the members of an arbitration board. Each party will select one member of the panel and then will need to agree on a chair. If the parties fail to make the required appointments within the required time, the Minister of Labour would be in a position to make appointments.

Even in legislation that cripples collective discussion, leave it to the Liberals to include provisions—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me. Sorry.

On a point of order, the member from Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I think it's important to note that the Ontario Labour Relations Board just recently ruled that the three local OSSTF strikes are unlawful.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Thank you very much. That's not a point of order.

Back to the member from Windsor West.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** On a point of order, the member from Windsor—Tecumseh.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I believe the member who just raised the point of order was in violation of the rules of the House by reading from her BlackBerry.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** That is a point of order. Back to the member from Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker. Even in legislation that cripples collective discussion, leave it to

the Liberals to include provisions that give themselves even more authority.

If a settlement with respect to local matters were reached, any mediation-arbitration proceeding that was under way would be terminated. Time limits for the mediation-arbitration process commence within 30 days of appointment. The time allocations for a decision could be extended if all parties agree. Any costs associated with mediation-arbitration would be shared by the parties.

Moving to some provisions under the term "award components," the award would include all local matters in dispute between the parties. The board of arbitration could not have jurisdiction to determine any matter within the scope of central bargaining at the central table. If there was a dispute between the parties on this point, the issue would be referred to the central table by the board of arbitration, and the board would only be required to consider any relevant factors as well as specified criteria generally consistent with other interest arbitration and back-to-work legislation.

By tabling this act, the Liberals are showing Ontarians once again that they would rather legislate than negotiate. Sure, before talks began, this government trumpeted their commitment to fair and open negotiations across Ontario. They spoke at length of the values of this new collective bargaining process, which was their antidote to the damage caused by former Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty's Bill 115. Of course, Premier McGuinty promised not to be like his predecessors Harris and Eves when it came to our education sector, only to force a contract upon teachers with Bill 115 once elected.

Now, with our current Premier, we are seeing a repeat of the McGuinty strategy of making promises, breaking promises, and blaming everyone else. It was this government that promised not to cut education. Not surprisingly, they cut education funding early on in their mandate and are now blaming professionals in the education system for the chaos their cuts have had in our schools. The Liberals promised to keep class sizes manageable in our schools, but they are now flip-flopping on this commitment and, not surprisingly, are blaming our education workers and families across Ontario for defending class caps. Rather than choosing to negotiate collectively, this government has again chosen to impose legislation.

What do our education workers have to say about this—the very professionals the government should be fostering a good relationship with? A release from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation reads as follows:

"The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) is extremely disappointed that the government of Ontario has decided to legislate an end to teacher and occasional teacher strikes at the Durham, Rainbow and Peel District School Boards.

"Nothing positive can ever come out of a legislated curtailment of a union's fundamental right to bargain freely and to withdraw services when necessary," said OSSTF/FEESO president Paul Elliott. "This government

created the current bargaining process, and we have made every effort to make it work. It's disappointing that the Premier and the education minister are so eager to subvert that process with legislation rather than roll up their sleeves and take an active role in helping to make the process work.'

"Elliott continued, 'It's clear to us that the minister's decision to ask the Education Relations Commission for a recommendation was nothing more than political cover for a government that has no real commitment to the bargaining process. Like their predecessors who introduced Bill 115 in 2012, this minister and this Premier would clearly rather legislate than negotiate.'

"We will continue to work for negotiated local agreements with all of the other school boards around the province, and for a fair, negotiated agreement at the central bargaining table. But this action by the government today has done nothing to help move negotiations forward,' Elliott concluded."

It's clear that this government's adversarial and top-down approach to bargaining has soured relationships with our education professionals and failed families who want the highest-quality education system for their children. It is essential that the government maintain public confidence in their ability to work collectively with their employees, but this government has failed on every front. Our public elementary school teachers are currently undertaking an administrative strike. Though this bill before the Legislature does not apply to them directly, it shows that the government is not interested in working collaboratively with our education partners. While the government has had months to negotiate with our education workers, they dragged their feet, only to now legislate secondary school teachers back to work.

In a release announcing their job action, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario president Sam Hammond stated: "After eight months of bargaining, it is entirely disingenuous of Minister Sandals to plead ignorance of how these and other issues have forced us to take this strike action."

Speaker, statements such as this underscore the inability of the Minister of Education to hold the public trust and work in collaboration with our education partners and with the best interests of students in mind. The Premier must fire her minister before she causes more havoc in our education system. The minister has failed students, failed families and failed to maintain a relationship with professionals in our education system. The Premier must fire her Minister of Education and get back to the central bargaining table. She must also work to create conditions for fair negotiations at local tables.

I've compared this government's handling of the education file to that of the Harris era several times since I took on the portfolio of education in March. This bill is certainly something out of the former PC Premier's playbook, but I think it's important to spend some time comparing this government's approach to education to that of the Harris era. I don't want to spoil the point I am about to make, but you will not believe the similarities.

1710

Let's begin with the differences, since there are far less of them. Former Premier Mike Harris was a Progressive Conservative; our current Premier is a Liberal. The PCs were governing in the 1990s and, of course, the Liberals are governing—

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** We have a point of order.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I do apologize to the member. I didn't mean to interrupt, but given the fact that the Ontario Labour Relations Board has deemed that this strike is illegal, would this legislation not therefore be redundant?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I don't believe that is a point of order.

Back to the member from Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker.

The PCs were governing in the 1990s and, of course, the Liberals are governing today. At the time, the PCs campaigned to cut education spending. The Liberals, on the other hand, promised not to cut education and continuously committed to fair and open negotiations with our education workers. Of course, we now know that they intended to do the complete opposite. In terms of their stance on education, it seems that this pretty much sums up the differences.

In 1997, then-Premier Mike Harris proposed massive changes to teachers' prep time and class sizes. These decisions resulted in 126,000 Ontario public and Catholic school teachers staging a two-week strike in protest of these changes. At the time, the strike affected more than two million students and was the largest in North American history.

When Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty was elected in 2003, right through to his resignation in 2013, Ontarians were told that the quality of education would improve. It's amazing. When a Liberal government is making grand commitments about improving education, they tout their plan, advertise it and plug it in any speech they deliver in this chamber. When they fail to live up to these commitments and break the promises that they used to get them here, all of a sudden the blame is laid at someone else's feet.

During contract negotiations in 2012, the McGuinty government spent eight months negotiating with educators. Again, to make up for his government's inability to work collaboratively with education workers, the Liberal Premier of the day chose to table the now infamous Bill 115 on January 3, 2012. This bill was an insult to the fair collective bargaining process. New Democrats opposed Bill 115 and oppose Bill 103 today.

Bill 115 sought to severely limit the right to strike by education workers in Ontario by imposing a two-year restraint period that commenced on September 1, 2012, for collective agreements expiring August 31. The bill banned strikes and lockouts during this two-year restraint period and deemed these actions unlawful. It gave the province the power to force employees to pay back any



money they received that contravened the act. The act prohibited the Labour Relations Board and any other arbitrators from either inquiring into or making decisions about the constitutionality of the act or whether the act is in conflict with the Human Rights Code. The bill allowed the government to impose a two-year contract on teachers. Perhaps most controversially, the bill gave the government the power to end a strike or lockout without debating the issue in the provincial Legislature.

In September 2012, the government passed this draconian legislation in the Legislature. It faced legal challenges by October 11 and province-wide protests throughout the remainder of the year and into 2013. At the time, the Liberals insisted that the bill was necessary and contained “tools within it to respond to provincial work-to-rule circumstances.” That was a quote from then-Minister of Education Laurel Broten.

Since then, the bill is remembered for what it was: not only a failed attempt by the government to unilaterally impose contracts on education workers and circumvent an established collective bargaining process, but a piece of legislation that stifled the voice of other elected officials, both at the provincial and municipal levels. It took away the voice of education workers, parents, students and elected school board trustees. The Liberal actions in tabling Bill 115 in 2012 showed their arrogance and great disrespect for an established bargaining process, the professionalism of our education workers and Ontario students and families by souring our relationship with education workers. This was their government bill. They crafted it, introduced it and enforced it.

Once the gas plant scandal surfaced and McGuinity resigned, our current Premier won the leadership of her party. Like so many before her, she promised not to cut education, to keep class sizes manageable and respect collective bargaining. The Premier appointed the member from Guelph to be her Minister of Education in both the 40th and 41st Parliaments. On September 24, 2014, the Premier wrote to her newly reappointed minister with a mandate letter that reads as follows:

“Dear Minister Sandals:

“I am honoured to welcome you back to your role as Minister of Education. We have a strong cabinet in place, and I am confident that together we will build Ontario up, create new opportunities and champion a secure future for people across our province. The people of Ontario have entrusted their government to be a force for good, and we will reward that trust by working every day in the best interests of every person in this province.

“As we implement a balanced and comprehensive plan for Ontario, we will lead from the activist centre. We will place emphasis on partnerships with businesses, communities and people to help foster continued economic growth and make a positive impact on the lives of every Ontarian. This collaborative approach will shape all the work we do. It will ensure we engage people on the issues that matter the most to them, and that we implement meaningful solutions to our shared challenges.”

The letter goes on to list some of the ministry priorities. Among these priorities, under the heading “Respecting Collective Bargaining,” the letter states:

“—Continuing to respect the collective bargaining process, as demonstrated by our introduction and passage of the School Boards Collective Bargaining Act. Collective bargaining enhances the ability of responsible employers and bargaining agents to increase productivity, deliver services and ensure fiscal sustainability. Any modest wage increases that may be negotiated must be absorbed by employers within Ontario’s existing fiscal plan.”

I don’t see anything in this mandate letter that calls on the minister to impose cuts to education, I don’t see anything that calls for the closure of good neighbourhood schools across the province, and I know that the heading “Respecting Collective Bargaining” did not indicate that the government was going to force teachers back to work.

I hope the Premier spends today writing a new mandate letter for the Minister of Education. I’ll even get it started for her. It could read something like this:

“Dear Minister:

“It seems that cutting \$248 million from education was not in the best interest of Ontarians. Creating the conditions that force good neighbourhood schools to close and dedicated educators out of a job was also ill-advised. It seems that Ontario families understand the value of special education and will not stand for it to be cut. Finally, your mandate very clearly laid out that the collective bargaining process was to be respected.

“Minister, you were given a job to do and failed on every front. I regret to inform you that, effectively immediately, you will cease to be the Minister of Education. Best of luck in your future endeavours.”

Speaker, the Premier has my permission to use this as a framework letter to inform the Minister of Education that she has been fired. With any luck, this can be done before the end of the day.

My point in all of this is to highlight the differences in what the Liberals promise and what they actually do. Today, education workers and stakeholders across the province are asking what happened. What happened to this government that was supposed to be committed to open negotiations? What happened to this government that promised not to cut education funding?

Today we see the Liberals’ true colours. We see just how committed they are to the collective bargaining process. We see just how much ownership they are willing to take for the chaos that they have created in our schools. If this government was truly committed to all that they promised to be committed to, each member would vote against Bill 103. Each member of the government caucus would admit that their government undervalued our education system and cut from vital programming, like special education.

I cannot stress enough that the actions of this government have created the chaos in our schools. When they announced the major funding envelopes for education

this March, the Minister of Education claimed—and to this date, continues to claim—that education funding is stable. If this was the case, the overall funding level would have been adjusted for inflation, but as all members in this chamber know, it was not. That is to say, while the minister claims that funding remained at \$22.5 billion from last year to this year, we know that real funding levels went down once rising costs were accounted for.

Let's look at a few in-depth examples:

- the Pupil Foundation Grant, which covers the cost of salaries, textbooks and classroom supplies, will be \$36 million lower this year. Government blames this on declining enrolment;

- 38 school boards will receive less funding under the Special Education Grant next year, including a \$3.5-million cut for the Toronto District School Board and a \$2.7-million cut for the Toronto Catholic District School Board;

- the high needs allocation will be frozen for the next four years at \$1.05 billion overall;

- there are significant cuts for school facilities operation and renewal, impacting underutilized, small and rural schools;

- base top-up funding for under-capacity schools will be eliminated over the next three years. It is being cut by \$38 million this year, or roughly one third;

- the Declining Enrolment Adjustment, which provides schools with a three-year transition period to align costs with lower enrolment, is being cut by half, which is about \$33 million, and it's being shortened to two years;

1720

- the Geographic Circumstances Grant to support small schools, rural boards and isolated communities is being cut by \$7 million, which is roughly 3.5%.

When this year's budget was released, we largely thought we knew what would be in it from an education perspective. As I stated before, the GSN funding was released prior to the budget. Just when we thought the government had cut all that it could from education funding, you can imagine our surprise when we discovered what was in store in this year's budget, the same budget that also outlined plans to sell off our major publicly owned hydro utility, which, according to the Minister of Education's own account, will deprive our education system of much-needed resources.

In the budget, we discovered a \$248-million, 2014-15 in-year cut to education funding. When I questioned the minister on this, when I asked her to admit to this and accept responsibility—and, Speaker, I can tell her exactly what page in her budget that number is on—I was told repeatedly that this is not a cut; it is money that's not being spent. Speaker, I don't know the difference between money that's cut and money that's not there to actually be used. If it walks like a duck and it quacks like a duck, I would say it's a duck. With their logic, the government would have you call it a rabbit.

The \$248 million could have funded special education programs in several of the school boards that received

less funding this year. It could have gone towards providing more in-classroom supports and resources for students or have been spent on repairing our neighbourhood schools.

The Minister of Education and Premier seem content to spin their answers when my New Democratic colleagues and I rise several times a week and ask them to stop their cuts to education system.

Personally, I've called on the government to stop the cuts, reverse the cuts and even to simply acknowledge that these cuts are taking place. Unfortunately, the government continually claims that there are no cuts. Tell that to the parents of students at the 38 school boards who won't get the special education resources they need to provide their child with the highest-quality education that we can and should offer.

Let's be clear. Special education includes supports for students who are struggling with classroom material and students who are not being challenged enough. That would be students who struggle and students who generally excel. Valuable resources dedicated to special education help students perform to the best of their ability and ensure that no student falls through the cracks in our education system. It is shameful that this government is depriving 38 school boards of the resources they need to provide quality education in Ontario.

As a result of Liberal cuts, we are also losing dedicated professional education workers. This includes full-time and occasional teachers, educational assistants, early childhood educators and all support staff. Unfortunately, when this government goes looking for savings, they always do it on the backs of hard-working Ontario families. Across the province, government cuts have forced school boards to shed jobs in one or several categories. Eliminating educational worker positions negatively impacts students. We know this, Speaker. We know the value of in-classroom support positions like early childhood educators or education assistants, yet these positions are always first on the chopping block for this government.

This is how short-sighted their approach to education is. They dramatically underfund our education system and create the conditions that have put our educational workers out of a job and deprived students from benefiting from dedicated staff. Speaker, 21 ECEs are on the chopping block in my riding of Windsor West. The Greater Essex County District School Board is considering eliminating these positions, no doubt due to funding shortfalls from the province. This is how their short-sighted cuts manifest at the local level.

The Toronto District School Board lost 215 teachers, 100 ESL educators and eight secretaries because of \$22 million in cuts.

The theme in all of this, the theme in my remarks today, is that the government sets the priorities for education in this province. However, whenever an issue arises in the education sector in Ontario—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Point of order.



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me.

Point of order? The member from Timmins–James Bay.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled on this particular matter. I would ask that the House be adjourned for a bit so that the House leaders can have a discussion in order to decide how we proceed from here.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Sorry, but that is not a point of order.

I refer it back to the member from Windsor West to continue.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Speaker, I'd like to move adjournment of the debate so that the House leaders can talk about the recent ruling.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Ms. Gretzky has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour say "aye."

All those opposed say "nay."

In my opinion, the nays have it.

It will be a 30-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1725 to 1755.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Can I ask the members to take their seats, please?

Ms. Gretzky has moved adjournment of the debate. All those in favour please rise.

All those opposed, please rise.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The ayes are 0; the nays are 70.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Please be seated.

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The member from Nepean–Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** Oh, sorry, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The ayes being 0 and the nays being 70, I declare the motion defeated.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Since it is now close to 6 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 6:45.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

*The House recessed from 1757 to 1845.*

*Evening meeting reported in volume B.*

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Simcoe–Burlington	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉES PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadi  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadi  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short





*Continued from back cover*

## **Ontario Energy Board**

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	4577
Hon. Bob Chiarelli.....	4577

## **Government regulations**

Ms. Ann Hoggarth.....	4578
Hon. Jeff Leal.....	4578

## **Employment supports**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	4578
Hon. Reza Moridi.....	4579

## **Public transit**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4579
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	4579
Hon. Steven Del Duca.....	4580

## **Correctional facilities**

Ms. Daiene Vernile.....	4580
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4580

## **Environmental protection**

Mr. Tim Hudak.....	4580
Hon. Bill Mauro.....	4581

## **Visitors**

Hon. Tracy MacCharles.....	4581
Mme France G��linas.....	4581

## **DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFF  R  S**

<b>Pooled Registered Pension Plans Act, 2015, Bill 57,</b> <b>Mr. Sousa / Loi de 2015 sur les r��gimes de pension</b> <b>agr��s collectifs, projet de loi 57, M. Sousa</b> Third reading agreed to.....	4582
--	------

<b>Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015, Bill 45,</b> <b>Ms. Damerla / Loi de 2015 pour des choix plus</b> <b>sains, projet de loi 45, Mme Damerla</b> Third reading agreed to.....	4583
--	------

## **INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PR  SENTATION DES VISITEURS**

Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4583
---------------------	------

## **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / D  CLARATIONS DES D  PUT  S**

<b>Mike Toth</b> Mr. Jeff Yurek.....	4583
---	------

<b>Mining fatality</b> Mr. John Vanthof.....	4583
---	------

<b>Nelson Mandela</b> Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4584
--	------

## **Holodomor**

Mr. Bill Walker.....	4584
----------------------	------

## **Police carding practices**

Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	4584
------------------------	------

## **Burlington's Best Awards**

Ms. Eleanor McMahon.....	4585
--------------------------	------

## **The Pitt**

Mr. Toby Barrett.....	4585
-----------------------	------

## **Hemochromatosis**

Mr. Chris Ballard.....	4585
------------------------	------

## **Holodomor**

Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4586
---------------------	------

## **Visitors**

Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4586
Mr. Chris Ballard.....	4586

## **REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMIT  S**

### **Standing Committee on Social Policy**

Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	4586
Report adopted.....	4586

## **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / D  P  T DES PROJETS DE LOI**

<b>Niagara Central Dorothy Rungeling Airport Act,</b> <b>2015, Bill Pr20, Mr. Hudak</b> First reading agreed to.....	4587
--	------

### **Weiche Estates Inc Act, 2015, Bill Pr21,** **Mrs. McGarry**

First reading agreed to.....	4587
------------------------------	------

<b>Universit�� de l'Ontario fran��ais Act, 2015, Bill 104,</b> <b>Mme G��linas / Loi de 2015 sur l'Universit�� de</b> <b>l'Ontario fran��ais, projet de loi 104, Mme G��linas</b> First reading agreed to.....	4587
Mme France G��linas.....	4587

## **MOTIONS**

### **House sittings**

Hon. James J. Bradley.....	4587
Motion agreed to.....	4588

## **PETITIONS / P  TITIONS**

### **Hydro rates**

Mr. Todd Smith.....	4588
---------------------	------

### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mme France G��linas.....	4588
--------------------------	------

<b>Terry Fox Day</b>	
Ms. Soo Wong .....	4588
<b>Landfill</b>	
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4588
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4589
<b>Employment standards</b>	
Mr. Arthur Potts.....	4589
<b>Personal support workers</b>	
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4589
<b>Ontario Disability Support Program</b>	
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4589
<b>Student safety</b>	
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4590
<b>Air quality</b>	
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4590
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4590
<b>Credit unions</b>	
Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4590
<b>Taxation</b>	
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4591

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

<b>Protecting the School Year Act, 2015, Bill 103, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 sur la protection de l'année scolaire, projet de loi 103, M. Flynn</b>	
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	4591
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	4592
Mr. John Yakabuski.....	4594
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4595
Mr. Glenn Thibeault .....	4595
Mr. Ted Arnett.....	4595
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn.....	4596
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4596
Mr. Wayne Gates.....	4598
Hon. Michael Gravelle.....	4598
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4598
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4599
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4599
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky.....	4599
Second reading debate deemed adjourned.....	4606



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 26 May 2015 / Mardi 26 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015, Bill 45, Ms. Damerla / Loi de 2015 pour des choix plus sains, projet de loi 45, Mme Damerla**

Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4557
Ms. Sophie Kiwala.....	4560
Mrs. Gila Martow.....	4560
Mr. Jagmeet Singh.....	4561
Mr. Mike Colle.....	4561
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4561
Mr. Yvan Baker.....	4562
Third reading vote deferred.....	4563

#### **Agriculture Insurance Act (Amending the Crop Insurance Act, 1996), 2015, Bill 40, Mr. Leal / Loi de 2015 sur l'assurance agricole (modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte), projet de loi 40, M. Leal**

Mr. John Vanthof.....	4563
Mr. Han Dong.....	4566
Mr. Ted Arnott.....	4566
Ms. Jennifer K. French.....	4566
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris.....	4567
Mr. John Vanthof.....	4567
Third reading debate deemed adjourned.....	4567

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Ms. Cheri DiNovo.....	4567
Mr. Robert Bailey.....	4567
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4567
Hon. David Zimmer.....	4567
Miss Monique Taylor.....	4567
Hon. Bill Mauro.....	4567
Mr. Peter Tabuns.....	4568
Hon. Bob Chiarelli.....	4568
Mr. Norm Miller.....	4568
Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4568
Mme France Gélinas.....	4568
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde.....	4568
Ms. Lisa MacLeod.....	4568
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	4568
Mr. Ernie Hardeman.....	4568
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4568
Mr. Rick Nicholls.....	4568
Hon. Dipika Damerla.....	4568

Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4568
Hon. Reza Moridi.....	4568
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	4568
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4568

#### **Annual report, Information and Privacy Commissioner**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4569
------------------------------------	------

#### **Legislative pages**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4569
------------------------------------	------

#### **Visitors**

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4569
------------------------------------	------

#### **Contempt of Parliament**

Mr. Steve Clark.....	4569
Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4570
The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac).....	4570

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4571
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	4571
Mr. Garfield Dunlop.....	4571

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Mr. Jim Wilson.....	4572
Hon. Bob Chiarelli.....	4572
Mr. John Yakubuski.....	4572

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4573
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	4573

#### **Privatization of public assets**

Ms. Andrea Horwath.....	4574
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne.....	4574

#### **Justice system**

Ms. Sylvia Jones.....	4575
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur.....	4575

#### **Teachers' labour disputes**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky.....	4575
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	4575

#### **Youth employment**

Mrs. Laura Albanese.....	4576
Hon. Brad Duguid.....	4576

#### **Special education**

Mr. Bill Walker.....	4576
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	4577

*Continued on inside back cover*

1200N  
X1  
023

Gouvernement  
Publication



No. 87B

N° 87B

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Tuesday 26 May 2015**

**Mardi 26 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday 26 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mardi 26 mai 2015

*The House recessed from 1757 to 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### PROTECTING THE SCHOOL YEAR ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 26, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation / *Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I recognize the member for Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I'll just finish where I had left off earlier in the day.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** It's an illegal strike.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Then maybe you should have waited for the OLRB ruling before you brought forth this legislation.

*Interjections.*

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Speaker.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Will the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs come to order?

**Hon. David Zimmer:** You're condoning criminal activity.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, come to order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Aboriginal Affairs—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** If you would allow me to do my job, I'd like to.

I would ask for your indulgence to behave the rest of the evening. And the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke, let me be the Speaker, not you.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Absolutely.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Okay.

The member for Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker. When I left off earlier, I was talking about the Toronto District

School Board and how they've lost 215 teachers, 100 ESL educators and eight secretaries because of \$22 million in cuts. The theme in all of this, the theme in my remarks today, is that this government sets the priorities for education in this province. However, whenever an issue arises in the education sector in Ontario, they take actions to limit their accountability.

In staying with the Toronto District School Board, the Liberals formed a panel for a hearing to address some of these issues. What they didn't include is their role in all that has happened at this school board. The consultations don't include any focus or reference to the actions of this government.

Well, Speaker, Ontarians are quick to catch on. A letter to the minister from an organization called Fix Our Schools, which largely organized around the issue, reads as follows—it was dated April 13, 2015.

“Dear Premier Wynne, Minister Sandals, Deputy Minister Zegarac:

“While governance of school boards is an important topic, the TDSB governance advisory panel seems merely a distraction from the more urgent issue of funding.

“This panel will not include any discussion of funding and, as such, will not address the real issues that impact TDSB student safety, well-being and ability to learn. Instead, this panel seems only to distract from the pursuit of funding solutions that would resolve urgent issues such as the \$3.3-billion repair backlog, cuts to special education and overcrowding at 146 TDSB schools.

“This panel will also not include the province's role in governance, even though the province has power over the both the money and major policy decisions pertaining to public education. This approach conveniently absolves the province of any responsibility for the issues plaguing TDSB schools and continues to place all the blame on the TDSB. In refusing to take any accountability, the province is undermining public confidence in the TDSB. As such, will you please:

“(1) Stop blaming the TDSB and start working with the TDSB and the city of Toronto to find funding solutions to resolve key issues such as the \$3.3-billion TDSB repair backlog, cuts to special education and overcrowding at 146 TDSB schools?

“(2) Stop citing selling off public schools as the funding solution for outstanding repairs and improving student programs and, instead, commit to your mandate of using schools as community hubs? Even if the TDSB were to immediately sell off all 130 schools operating at 65% utilization or lower (as per provincial calculations), there would be over \$1 billion of repairs in the remaining 458 schools.



1850

“(3) Release emergency funding immediately to repair all leaking roofs and complete every ‘urgent’ repair currently outstanding at TDSB schools to ensure children attend school in safe, well-maintained buildings?”

“(4) Commit to using information from the TDSB governance panel in a manner that does not subject TDSB children to a massive reorganization at this time, such as splitting up the TDSB into smaller boards, which will only continue to delay the pursuit of funding solutions?”

It was signed,

“Kind regards,

“Krista Wylie—on behalf of Fix Our Schools.”

Every week I’m copied on a similar letter to the Premier demanding that this government accept accountability for the chaos that they are creating in our schools. Clearly, Ontarians are not being fooled by Liberal spin. This organization knows the facts. In fact, Speaker, Toronto school boards have already been forced to cut 260 jobs, including 50 special education staff, and parents in the Toronto Catholic board are trying to protect the intensive special education support programs that their children need.

Fact: The Toronto District School Board will be trimming another \$7 million from its budget on top of making \$16.5 million in cuts to balance its budget. The board recently announced that they would not be filling some jobs that came open mid-year.

We know that students will bear the brunt of these sizable cuts to publicly funded education in the province. Speaker, we’re taught from a young age that the division of powers in our constitutional monarchy and people across Ontario know that the provincial government is responsible for education. There is no constitutional provision that specifies that this is only when things are moving well on the file, but given the actions of the government, you would seem to think so. No, this government must wear the mess that they are making in our schools.

I was in Peterborough not too long ago for a panel discussion with secondary school teachers. In this area, at the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, 118 full-time contract teachers were declared redundant. For so many, this wasn’t their first time. Listening to their stories, you really got a sense of the impact that this has had on their life. While many Ontarians face precarious work in this province, it’s always difficult to hear the personal narratives of those most impacted.

Largely, these positions were eliminated because of—you guessed it—Liberal cutbacks to education funding. Again, this government is at the forefront of the havoc in our education system. They are creating the mess. This month, we discovered that 50 educational assistant positions and early childhood educators in Bruce-Grey are on the chopping block. In Simcoe county, the Simcoe County District School Board special education budget was reportedly cut by \$1.7 million, as indicated by the chairperson. As a result, nine special education resource teacher positions were eliminated, as well as 11 educational assistants.

Let’s walk through the process once more so my colleagues across the floor can understand their role. As the Minister of Education has said several times, the provincial government administers education funding in Ontario. This year, major cuts were made to this funding, and these cuts have resulted in job losses at the board level. What do you think the root of all this is, Speaker? The buck stops with Liberal cuts.

I’ve spoken at length about the Liberal cuts to education and the impact these have had across Ontario. It seems that the one thing the government does have money for, ironically, is to close schools. Yes, amid sweeping, across-the-board cuts to education funding, the government announced their school consolidation fund. In fact, they trumpeted it from the rooftops. This fund allocates money to force neighbourhood schools to close. This is where the government is allocating our precious education resources. My office receives calls every week from people across Ontario concerned about the closure of their good neighbourhood schools.

As the minister continues to state, it is the government that administers education funding. It is government underfunding that forces our schools to close. When a neighbourhood school is forced to close, the fabric of the community suffers. You may be losing your community park, green space or child care space in your community. In some neighbourhoods in Windsor, when the neighbourhood school is forced to close, the long-term viability of the neighbourhood is at risk. In so many of these areas, we are trying to attract residents and incentivize young families to stay in the neighbourhood. Students in areas like Old Sandwich Town deserve to go to school in Old Sandwich Town.

When a school is forced to close in rural areas you are losing the identity of the community. If you live in LaSalle, if you live in Kingsville or Leamington, your children should be able to go to school in your community. You should be able to access health care in your community and other social services. This government is clear that it expects students to commute long distances to attend class. It wants to hollow out our rural communities. It’s clear that this government does not understand the concept of community.

It is this government that forced the closure of 88 schools across the province since 2011. It is this government’s cuts to education that threaten the closure of neighbourhood schools like Lakefield district secondary or Norwood District High School in the Peterborough area. In southwestern Ontario, Amherstburg along with Harrow and Kingsville are being forced to pick and choose which community will get to keep its school.

I attended meetings in April to hear the voices of Ontario families that were fighting to keep their schools open, and I was joined by my colleague the member from Essex at one of the meetings. These schools include Harrow District High School, Harrow Public School, Kingsville high and Western Secondary School. Western is the last vocational school in the area. Students and graduates spoke passionately about saving this school;

some were even in tears. Students and alumni spoke about how they came to Western from other schools or left Western and eventually returned because they saw the value of the special programming that Western Secondary School offered. Most, if not all, of the students at Western have special needs that can only be accommodated at a vocational school. I listened as hundreds of parents gathered for an opportunity to speak out, but the meeting was limited to only 90 minutes of comments, so many did not get a chance.

Speaker, I can speak on a different level to the potential closures of the schools I talked about because they, in fact, are part of the public board that I was a trustee on. To fully understand the impact that it would have on these communities, we've had the town council in Essex actually pass a resolution to fight the closure of local schools.

We have a government that touts healthy choices—they say they want kids to have physical activity—and, yet, they're forcing school board trustees to close schools, put kids on buses and send them sometimes half an hour to an hour on a bus to get to school rather than allowing them to walk to and from school every day.

Many of the people that come to these meetings have talked about how the process pits school communities and families against each other—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Would the member from Kitchener Centre come to order, please.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It pits municipality against municipality, and families feel that schools are often targeted. Those in the most marginalized areas are the most vulnerable schools, and often are the ones that face closure.

The process, as I mentioned, often favours closing community schools where students have the opportunity to walk and puts them on the bus and sends them across town. Parents will tell you, Speaker, that putting children on a bus to send them to school also limits their after-school activities—their ability to participate in sports, or by the time they get home from school on the bus, it limits what the family can actually do together by the time the students get home and sit down and finish their homework.

To make it easier for this government to force schools to close, the government announced changes to the pupil accommodation review guidelines. In fact, these came out the same day that the government announced their cuts to the GSN funding. So the Liberals both cut education and turned the pupil accommodation review guidelines into a playbook on how to close schools—both on the same day.

Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines—or PARGs—outline the minimum standard process by which local school boards conduct reviews to determine the future of local schools. Given this government's appetite for school closures, I would think that we need as robust a process as possible to ensure our neighbourhood schools remain open. We will not accept government cuts that force the closure of schools. The PARGs

were last updated in June 2009. In November 2014, the Liberals quietly released a consultation document for changes to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline governing the process for school closure decisions at local school boards. People for Education posted this document on December 7.

The deadline for public feedback to the Ministry of Education was December 18. The revised guidelines announced in March of this year required school boards to conduct long-term enrolment planning and invite municipalities and potential community partners to an annual meeting. School boards must document their efforts to engage municipal governments and community partners. After engaging and undertaking the long-term enrolment assessment, a school board may proceed to request a staff report on accommodation of the schools in question.

**1900**

However, the guidelines cut public meetings in half. The minimum timeline of process will be cut from seven months, with four public meetings, to just five months, with only two public meetings. A newly created loophole will allow for an optional shortened accommodation review process, with no committee and only one public meeting. The process would take just two months.

The Rural Ontario Institute stated: "The extremely limited timeline for commenting on these proposed changes suggests the ministry is not prepared to have an extended public discussion about this even though many rural stakeholders would likely be concerned about the potential impact of the changes especially for communities that have only a single school." They indicated that they have strong concerns that the proposed PARG changes fail to encourage school boards serving rural and small-town Ontario to consider community, economic and social impacts in situations where the community has only a single school.

Community Schools Alliance's Doug Reycraft said, "These changes are really just a recipe for an avalanche of closures across the province. To take the existing process and make it tighter is just an affront to democracy."

With these changes, it's clear that the Liberals are trying to cut community input when deciding the future of community schools. Again we see this government misplacing its priorities. The government is focused on eliminating participation in school reviews and paving the way for more schools to close. The government, the Minister of Education and the Premier should be focused on building community hubs. When they committed to utilize schools as community hubs in the province, we expected that there would still be neighbourhood schools left.

Communities cannot be silenced when it comes to the future of their local schools. Limiting community input is the wrong thing to do. These changes confirm what New Democrats have been saying: The Liberals are intent to shut down even more local schools across Ontario, no matter what the impact is on students, families and local communities.



**Mr. John Yakabuski:** How is this relevant to the bill?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My New Democrat colleagues and I know that decisions about local schools must always be made with the best interests of the whole child and the whole community in mind. School closures cannot be forced on communities to soften the minister's bottom line.

I spoke at length today about government cuts to education in a number of areas across the province and the ramifications of these short-sighted, ill-conceived cuts. The point in all of this is to highlight the government's failure on all fronts in education.

I heard one of the members from the PC caucus say that this wasn't relevant to bill. I think it's very relevant to the bill. This speaks to how the Liberal government has mismanaged the education file. They are cutting education. Page 230 of your own budget says—although you won't say “We've cut,” you will say, “We just didn't spend,” which is basically the same thing; let's be honest—\$248-million in-year cut to education; a millions-of-dollars cut to special education. The minister will stand up and defend these cuts—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Kitchener Centre.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** —in fact, she'll say it's not happening. I can tell you, as a former school board trustee—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Sorry. The member for Kitchener—Waterloo, please come to order—second warning.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I can tell you that these cuts to education are happening, regardless of whether this government wants to admit it or not.

We have people in our communities coming forward with children who have special needs. They're being affected by these cuts that the Liberal government refuses to admit are happening.

The government continually denies that they are responsible for the chaos that has been created in our schools. This bill that we're debating today speaks greatly to the fact that they are not tuned in to what is really going on in our schools in this province, and that they are creating the chaos themselves.

We feel it's time for them to stand up and take responsibility for the issues that they have caused. Bringing forward this legislation now, Bill 103, to legislate the teachers in three boards back to work just goes to show that they are once again shirking their responsibility. There has been an opportunity to negotiate a deal for months—for months—and they did not come to the table and negotiate fairly.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** It's an illegal strike.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** We wouldn't be debating this bill if they would take responsibility, take a really good look at what is going on in education, and try to make some positive changes, rather than causing the chaos that you have.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** We have a responsibility to uphold the law.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Speaker, I have just a little bit of time left, but I would like to point out that the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs is sitting over there yelling that it's an illegal strike and basically saying that teachers are criminals for walking out. I think that that's an insult not only to education workers but to the people that have supported them and understand the value that they are to this system. We had the member from Nickel Belt stand up during petitions. She had 2,600 students. She didn't start the petition; they did—2,600 students in the Rainbow board, where the teachers were out, who signed a petition to say that they support their teachers because they know the value of them.

The ORLB has made the ruling; kids are going back to school tomorrow. There is no need for anyone in this government to sit there and imply that teachers are criminals. If they were criminals, they wouldn't be in our classrooms teaching our kids. I think it's an insult to the professionals in our classrooms.

To sit there and deny the chaos that they are causing—Speaker, they can deny it all they want, but again, I'll go back to page 230 of their budget. It's in there, plain as day: a \$248-million in-year cut to education. It's time that they stepped up to the plate, admitted that they've made mistakes and try and fix the system.

Stop standing up there and saying that the parents of kids with special education needs are basically making it up that their kids are not getting the supports that they need. Stop standing there and usurping the authority of trustees and then throwing it in their laps and saying, “It's their mess, not ours.” I think that it's shameful that this government will not take responsibility for the mess that they've made of our education system and then try to put it back on someone else and wash their hands of it.

As the member from Windsor—Tecumseh said earlier in debate—again, he knows we're not supposed to have props; we all know we're not supposed to have props. But really, the minister should sit over there with a bowl of water and some soap and actually do the actions of washing her hands of the problem.

That's pretty much my time, Speaker. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** What I think is shameful from those last set of comments is that there's no discussion about declining enrolment. There is no discussion going on about the amount of money, which has increased on a per pupil basis.

But what I want to talk about in my little bit of time I have here is the students—the students in Durham, in Sudbury, in Peel—who were at risk, potentially, of not completing the school year if we didn't take action. I always believe a negotiated settlement is the way to go, and that is still entirely possible. There's nothing that says a settlement can't be reached.

I have two grade 12 children of my own in the Durham District School Board. I know first-hand how important it is that they complete their school year and how worried they are about what's going to happen to them. I've sat as an SCC school president and I have sat

on the special ed advisory committee, so I know firsthand how the system works.

We're worried about kids not finishing their year. We're worried about kids who aren't doing well and need the rest of the year to get those grades up. We're worried about kids who didn't get a first-round offer from a college or university. We're worried about kids who do have offers but their admission is conditional on a minimal mark in certain subjects, like you have to have 65 in English to be accepted to this college or that university. That's what we're worried about.

It was the ERC that advised yesterday that this is all in jeopardy. This is not what we're saying; this is what the Education Relations Commission says. And of course today we have the OLRB ruling that says that the strikes are indeed illegal.

I'm looking forward to seeing my children get back to school as soon as possible. I'm looking forward to all kids getting back to school as soon as possible and working with the administration to have a good end of year.

1910

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It's a pleasure to be the honest broker in this fight here this evening, my goodness gracious. There seems to be an awful lot of ill will going across the aisle between the third party and the government, and I'm here to try to bring them together. Perhaps if I was mediating this thing, we would have never had a strike in the first place.

But having said that, here we are. We have a strike in the Durham, the Peel and the Rainbow boards, but the Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled that the strike is illegal. So where are we? We understand that the students are going back to school tomorrow, but we're still debating this piece of legislation.

Look, I know there's lots of lawyers in the backrooms up in the Premier's office, probably having coffee and cake right now, thinking, "We've got to figure out a way out of this thing." But the common-sense thing to me would be that we simply let these folks get back to work. Because the priority all along, from our point of view—our caucus and our critic, Garfield Dunlop—has been, "Let's get our children back in school."

I don't have any children in school anymore, but I have grandchildren in school. I certainly wouldn't want them to be out for six weeks, like these people in Durham have been. For six weeks they've been out of school, and that is absolutely unacceptable, that we should have to have waited this long.

Have we waited so long that the Ontario Labour Relations Board has actually done the work that the government should have been doing six weeks ago; that is, getting our children back and doing what is necessary? As the minister said, "I'm going to do whatever is necessary to get our children back in school." Well, was that any less necessary six weeks ago?

It's a failure on the part of this government. They should be ashamed of themselves, and by God, I hope they learn to do better in the future.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It's a pleasure to comment on what I thought was a very comprehensive analysis of where we are in public education from the member for Windsor West. As a former trustee, she actually understands what's happening on the ground in school boards. People run for trustee because they actually care about students and they care about the quality of education, so she brought those values and those principles to this debate, and I want to thank her for that.

I remember when we were talking about Bill 122. The NDP raised this one concern, and the concern was that, according to the legislation, employers, being school boards, "shall co-operate in good faith with the crown in preparing for and conducting central bargaining," but there was no reciprocal requirement for the crown—i.e., the government—to co-operate in good faith. I think we've seen that play itself out here in the province of Ontario, with the government not bargaining in good faith, not bringing the interests of the people of this province to the table. That is why you have created this chaos in public education.

At the time of this debate, the commentary on the Liberal government and where they are with public education, I said: "We saw this centralized system of power that the Liberals brought in, a very neo-Liberal agenda that was somewhat patronizing to school boards: 'You do a good job. We'll tell you what to do. We're not going to give you the resources to do it, but we're going to give you the mandate to do it, and then we're going to punish you if you don't do it properly, as we see fit.' This is not a healthy relationship."

That's where we right now in the province of Ontario with public education, and it is a sad, sorry state of affairs.

I remember when Mr. Snobelen, formerly of the PC caucus, said, "We're going to create a crisis in education, and then we're going to push that envelope and we're going to get what we want." When he said that, he was on the record. The Liberal government has done the same thing, except they didn't get caught on tape. But we know what you have done to public education in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I could entitle this two minutes "Pandering, pandering, pandering," but I know a lot more.

I recall a time when I was in grade 9 and Bette Stephenson—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** The earth was young and dinosaurs ruled.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order. Stop the clock. The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke, I would like to have a little bit of discipline.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You got it from me.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Okay.



**Mr. Chris Ballard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

New into grade 9, and we had a secondary school strike that put us out for—I think it was almost two months we were out of class. I think it actually was the first time that we had a secondary school strike in Ontario. I certainly remember that, although I was not a student who necessarily enjoyed being in school, after a couple of weeks, we knew that things were pretty serious. After six weeks, we knew that we were in trouble even in grade 9. It was not fun anymore.

I sympathize with the secondary students who have been out for that long. I am in complete agreement with the Education Relations Commission, the independent body that tells us that the school year is at risk. For us, it certainly was, and for us, the repercussions of almost two months out of school echoed for the entire time. Just to show how old I am, right through to grade 13 we were still playing catch-up with some of our classes.

I was happy to hear that the ERC advised that the school year was in jeopardy. I was satisfied with the introduction of Bill 103, designed to get the 70,000 students from Durham, Sudbury and Peel back into the classroom where they belong so that their school year wasn't in jeopardy, and so they won't have to play catch-up like we did to those many years ago.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member from Windsor West. You have two minutes.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Just to wrap up on some of the comments that have been made: The member from Kitchener–Waterloo was also a school board trustee. She knows what the trustees face on a regular basis. As she pointed out—so clearly pointed out—the government controls the purse strings. What they say to school boards, to trustees, is, “Here’s less to work with. Here’s less funding for education.” Some 38 school boards received less funding for special education. What the government says to the trustees is, “Okay, we understand you’re elected officials. We think you can do a good job. Here’s less money to deal with for special education and you’re going to have to make it work. Heaven help you all if those kids don’t succeed, because we’re going to lay the blame on you.”

A \$248-million in-year cut this year—the 2014-15 school year—that they continue to deny: They passed that down to school boards, down to trustees, and they say, “Figure out how to service the students well with this, but don’t ask us for any more when the money’s run out. When you can’t actually provide for those students, because we’ve put such restrictions on the money and given you less, don’t come to us.”

What this bill points out is the government’s continuing failure to adequately manage the education file. The fact that they continue to put the blame on everyone else—just like with this bill. For years they’ve underfunded education. They’ve caused chaos in the schools. When things started to break down—they had months to deal with this, didn’t come to the table—they then put it on this side of the room and said, “We want you to fix it by helping us put teachers back to work.”

The point is, we can’t support something like this. We want the government to stand up and actually admit to their mistakes and start moving forward in a positive manner.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Good evening, everybody, and welcome to night sittings on Bill 103, the Protecting the School Year Act. Thank you for allowing me to speak today, Mr. Speaker. Considering this bill was put on the table yesterday, this has been a major topic of debate. I’m happy to have a chance to discuss this bill.

When I take a look at the current state of negotiations between the government and the teachers, I have to wonder how exactly we got here and why exactly they feel this legislation is necessary.

**1920**

Let’s be clear—and I want the Liberals to listen to this, because I know they’re busy over there. The Liberals created this crisis; make no mistake about it. The Liberals are responsible for the crisis. It’s not the teachers; it’s not the parents; it’s not the kids; it’s the Liberal government. So let’s make no mistake about that.

I’m going to outline a few things, which I believe may—

**Interjection:** Don’t yell.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Sorry. I’ll cool it down. I apologize.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It is what it is. This is what you get. What you see is what you get.

When we look at all the cuts that the teachers are facing, we have to wonder: What is causing these cuts? What’s causing these issues? We have to ask where the money went and why it isn’t being used in education.

There have been quite a lot of cuts to the education sector since 2011. It seems like those cuts are just going to keep on coming. It’s like that little bunny. What’s that bunny’s name?

**Interjection:** The Energizer Bunny.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** The Energizer Bunny; yup. Anyone watching this Liberal government can see some examples of where this money went and why they need to make these cuts. I’m going to list a few of them. I know Liberals know what they are, but I’m going to list them anyway: cancelled gas plants; paying people to delete documents; Ornge Air; smart meters. They all cost this province money.

We look at the Auditor General’s report, which showed—now, it showed this. This isn’t Wayne Gates saying this; this isn’t the NDP saying this; it’s not the Conservatives saying this; this is the Auditor General. This province paid upwards of \$8.2 billion more than they needed to because they relied on P3s.

When you add those up, and I’m sure there are some teachers at home who are adding this up, doing the math, you can see that around \$13 billion was wasted on these projects and these failures. Think about this; I want you all to think about this, on both sides. That \$13 billion

could have gone to transportation—we've heard a lot about transportation, on selling off our hydro, giving up our public utility—to health care, or it could have—

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Are you going to talk about our kids?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** —to your point, and I'm glad you're listening—it could have gone to education. That's where it could have gone: \$13 billion could have gone to education. So I'm glad you asked that question; I hope I answered it—billions of dollars that could have been used to keep class sizes manageable and to make sure the children of this province receive the education that I believe they're entitled to.

Instead, what we're seeing in this province is quite the opposite. Instead of putting money back into schools, we're seeing that money come out of the education sector. The numbers prove this. The money coming out of education: Since 2011—that's not that long ago, and some of the people who are here today were here in 2011; I wasn't here in 2011—88 schools in the province have been closed. That's 88 communities affected in some way by school closures.

I saw first-hand how much this government cared about communities fighting for schools when it came to Parliament Oak school in my riding in Niagara-on-the-Lake. This is important: Parliament Oak is called that because it was the first Parliament of Upper Canada. The first Parliament of Upper Canada—that was Parliament Oak school in Niagara-on-the-Lake—in what would become Ontario was held on the site of an old oak tree that stood where the school stands today, the building that stands today. Its history—think about this—at Parliament Oak school can be directly related to what happens on the grounds of Parliament Oak school in the Old Town. Parliament Oak was the heart of the Old Town, an institution that people in that town respected and, at the end of the day, loved. The residents of the community—the parents, the school teachers—fought tooth and nail to save that school so that their kids could get an education in the Old Town.

In this House, I asked the government to stand with the parents of that community time and time again. The government never did. They were happy to make education cuts and then pass the buck with every opportunity they had. They were never there to stand with the parents of Niagara-on-the-Lake. They never seemed to want to listen to that community.

You didn't just not listen to Niagara-on-the-Lake; you didn't listen to the other 88 schools that you closed in the province of Ontario. The parents organized fundraisers, committees, and even tried to save their school in the court system. Every step of the way, they were asking this government to help their children to have an education in the Old Town. It was always ignored. While this community was fighting tooth and nail to save their school, this government was slashing the amount of days required to consult with the public before a school closure.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Shameful.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Decisions could be made—now, that's shameful. Think about it: The parents can't even come and say, "Don't close the school, and these are the reasons why." You're taking that away from them. While the parents have—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would appeal to the member that I've been listening carefully for well over six minutes and I would like you to relate your remarks to what's in front of us—the bill—because you're really way off topic.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that, Speaker, and I'll try to stay on the issue of education, although I thought I was doing that.

For Niagara-on-the-Lake, the issue is huge. Families have had a hard time moving to new communities and settling down where there is no school for their kids. They don't want to hear that their kids have to travel an hour—an hour. Kids who are five and six years old travel an hour on a bus. It hurts the town. It hurts the community.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'd like you guys to listen. This is the kind of environment that education advocates are facing in the province today. This is the kind of environment that advocates are facing through the Premier, who's a former school trustee and Minister of Education. Think about this: They're facing a government that has drafted a budget that contains \$750 million to close schools in the province of Ontario. I believe that's shameful. But here's the part that really bothers me: Do you know how much money they're putting in to keep them open? Anybody know? Maybe on that side; help me out. Mr. Speaker: zero. Think about that: \$750 million to close them and zero to keep them open, when you have all the infrastructure there. When you have the principals, the school and the hub of the community right in every community right across the province of Ontario, not one penny is being put into keeping our schools open.

1930

That's why I'm concerned about this bill—to your point, Mr. Speaker. Even the title of the bill—I'm not sure who drafted this, but I think a better title would be, "Blame the teacher act." We've seen that since day one with the Minister of Education. The Minister of Education has been saying that the teachers—think about this, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education said right over here—it was a front-page story. Do you know what they said? That the teachers were itching for a strike. Think about that. I don't know any teacher who—and I'm married to a teacher. My daughter is a teacher. My middle daughter works with special needs in the Catholic school board. My daughter is in grade 12 at St. Mike's in Niagara Falls. So I hang around with teachers. I talk to teachers all the time. And I'll be honest with you and I'll be honest with the group here: I go out with teachers. They are not the most fun people to go out with. Listen: Teachers—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Because this is what this is about. This is about: What are teachers like? Teachers don't



want to be on strike. They want to be in the classroom. They want to be with their kids. And when I go out, it's the same thing.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** A point of order from the member for Nepean—Carleton.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I just want to draw the member's attention to that the teachers may not want to be on strike but they were performing an illegal strike, hence the reason we were having this legislation and hence they're continuing to drag this on by talking about an illegal strike and trying to defend an illegal strike which earlier today the Ontario Labour Relations Board decided to deem an illegal strike.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for that point of order.

I would recognize the member, and again I ask you to speak to the bill that's in front of us.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I appreciate that. I'm talking about Bill 103, but I'm fine with it if you think that—maybe I'll get down to the education cuts that threaten the form of education. As class sizes get bigger and teachers lose their jobs, and things used in the classroom to help our kids learn start to disappear, we begin to lose the connection between teachers and students. It's not because the teachers stop caring once the cuts come in; it's because they simply don't have the ability to teach dozens of kids all the time.

These education cuts are hurting our children. They can be stopped tomorrow, and we can start working on making sure our kids have the absolute best education in the country—not just in Ontario, but in the country. We do this by supporting schools and supporting teachers. They can only do so when the tools given to them—when this government takes them from them, they take from our children. They take away the ability for our children to have the best possible chance in this country to succeed. It's unfortunate, but that's the way this goes. The government may just come in, make some cuts and try to bring in money that they lost on gas plants and P3s. But why should the future generations have to pay?

Here's the part, Mr. Speaker, that I think you're going to enjoy. And I'd like the Liberals on that side to listen, because this is important. It goes to the very heart of Bill 122. They put Bill 122 in place, and it was bargained between the parties, where the unions, the government and the opposition came to Bill 122. And what they did with it is that they split it up into a local and a master, or national, agreement. That's how it was done, and it was under Bill 122.

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Well, here's the part that I think you might find interesting, if they give me the opportunity to talk here. I've had the privilege, as a union rep and a president of a local union, to bargain 150 collective agreements, with one three-day strike. But what happened under Bill 122—because in General Motors, where I participated in the bargaining process in 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2014, guess what we were able to do locally and at the national table, or the master

table. We were able to get a negotiated collective agreement. And when I look at other workplaces in my area, there's a place called Securitas, which had the same type of mechanism as Bill 122, and it was the same thing. It was the same thing. We were able to get a negotiated collective agreement in those same years. So Bill 122 isn't the problem.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what the problem is? The problem is, when you go to a bargaining table, you need a dance partner; you need somebody to actually bargain the collective agreement with. You need somebody on that side of the table who is going to bargain with you. And what happened under this process is, the teachers went to it and the only thing that has been asked at the bargaining table is concessions. How do we do that? So what happens is, Bill 122 can't work. It's not the bill that's the problem. The problem is that the Liberal government has chosen not to get a negotiated collective agreement. They chose to do what they're doing to the teachers, and it's wrong. They know exactly what they're doing at the bargaining table. So it's not the bill; it's the government.

I would like to conclude on a few points, if I may. But I want to make sure—because for the 16 minutes that I've been talking, unfortunately the other side of the House has been heckling, they've been saying things. You've been doing all that kind of stuff. But do you know what? Here's the reality: This is too important to the province of Ontario—and who created the mess? Who created it?

**Interjection:** Right over there.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Right across there.

This crisis was created by you. You decided to do that. That's the way it is.

I would like to conclude on a few points, if I may. Like I said, this doesn't need to be a game of blaming the teachers or the school boards or whoever. This can be solved with good faith—and that's what you're not doing. You're certainly not doing it in good faith.

I have to wonder what kind of education system these students will be returning to. This government—not anybody on this side; you've got a majority—has cut \$250 million from education in 2014-15. There are teachers—think about this: Our teachers are some of the most educated people in the province of Ontario; I think we're all proud of our teachers—who are being fired, and their schools are being closed.

We know there have been cuts to special education funding in this province. Do you know how I know that? As I said earlier, my daughter Tara works in special needs. These cuts have resulted in less opportunity in education, fewer classroom supports.

Think about this: What are you fundraising for now? When I went to school, we fundraised for equipment, maybe sports or something. We're actually fundraising now in our schools for books, we're fundraising for pens and pencils, because of the cuts in education. That's what's happening.

It's even tougher, I'm going to say—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Davenport, come to order, please.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Mr. Speaker, this is important, because that's what happens. What happens is, if you live in a relatively rich area, you're getting a lot more funds. So a school that's in an area that's maybe a little more challenged, like my wife's school, where they used to have a breakfast club—and do you know what they used to do? I was amazed at this. The teachers, on their own, would go on Sunday to one of the grocery stores and they would buy food. They would show up at school at 7:30 in the morning—not just one day a week; every single day—and they would make breakfast for those kids, who, by the way, are lined up at the door at a quarter to 8 in the morning because they probably didn't have supper the night before. It was the teachers that did that. In a lot of cases, they did it out of their own pockets. They never told anybody, and they never put it in the paper.

1940

These are the teachers that this government has chosen to attack and say publicly that they're itching for a strike. There isn't a teacher, I believe, that shouldn't be shown the respect and the dignity that they deserve because every one of us can think of a teacher that made a difference in our lives. I think it's shameful how the teachers are being treated in the province of Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Eleanor McMahon:** You know, Speaker, it won't surprise anybody in this House to know that I might have some disagreements with the member opposite despite his vociferous comments. I appreciate his passion for this subject; it's one that is shared by many of the members of this Legislature.

You know, there have been lots of comments this evening about the children and the teachers. I want to talk about the children in a moment because, really, this is what this conversation should be about. This should be about our children and getting them back to school, because that's what we want to do and that's what we're committed to doing because we want our children to have a good, solid education. Why do we want that? Because we know that investments in education are important, and so that's why there has been an increase of \$8.1 billion since 2003 by this government, an increase of 56%. Per pupil funding has increased by \$4,260 to \$11,451 since 2003, an increase of 59%.

I'd like to, because it's important to the people in my riding, talk a little bit about Halton and our school board in Halton. I just want to talk about the Halton District School Board for a moment. But before I do, let me just say quickly that I have teachers in my life too, as many of us do. I have a brother-in-law who's a retired teacher, and I have two nieces who are teachers. They work very hard and are committed to their students. I can't think of people who are more dedicated and committed to the learning environment for the children in their classrooms.

Closer to home, though, in Halton, we have 60,000 students in the Halton District School Board alone. The

results, when you look at the annual report from last year by the director of education in Halton, are astounding. Our grade 3 and grade 6 students continue to improve. In secondary math scores, 90% of students are taking secondary math in the academic stream—applied math. You know, these students are all succeeding as a level 3 or 4, which means—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It's my pleasure to join this debate today because I think it's important that those who are watching from home or those who are clearly mystified by the goings-on in the Ontario Legislature today are fully understanding and aware of where we're at.

Earlier today, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the ongoing strike in three districts across Ontario was illegal. Hence, two things: One, it made sure that this legislation we are debating is entirely irrelevant or, as my colleague from Northumberland—Quinte West says, is moot; and that those in the New Democratic Party are continuing to defend an illegal strike.

I think the better use of the Legislature's time today is actually to be talking about issues that are relevant to children in our classrooms. My husband informed me about 40 minutes ago that outside of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board there was a protest outside. Perhaps we could be talking about some of those issues. But perhaps we could also be talking about legislation that's actually relevant in this assembly.

This piece of legislation, at the moment, is irrelevant. The government has an obligation to take it off the order paper. In fact, I think it's incumbent upon the New Democrats to understand that the Ontario Labour Relations Board—they should actually respect their ruling, which suggests and said very clearly that this strike that has been ongoing in Rainbow, in Peel and in Durham is illegal. It is unlawful, and therefore we are simply just adding more words to Hansard rather than actually settling any educational issue in the province of Ontario this evening.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I appreciate the opportunity to add comments on the remarks by the member of Niagara Falls. I'd like to address what the member from Nepean—Carleton had said about the fact that we're defending an illegal strike. I don't think that anybody over here has actually stood up and said that we defend an illegal strike. We respect the ruling of the OLRB. What we have issue with, and why we can't support Bill 103, is the fact that the government has created this crisis in education, and they refuse to stand up and take responsibility. Instead of taking responsibility, they've lobbed it over to this side of the room and said, "We've screwed it up. We want you to help us fix it."

What we want and what people in Ontario would really like from their government is for them to stand up and take responsibility for their decisions, take a good



look at what is going on in education and help move it forward in a positive manner. They've had months to deal with this, to go to the bargaining table, to have lots of back-and-forth. As the member from Niagara had pointed out, it's a dance. You need everybody at the table, willing to sit and negotiate, and there's back and forth from every party. The government has not done that, and because they chose to sit on their hands and let all these problems fester, the teachers went out on strike, and they sent it over to us to try to solve their problems.

We respect the ruling of the OLRB. What we don't respect is a government that refuses to stand up and take responsibility for the mess that they've created, expecting that the members on this side—the PC caucus, as well; they expect all of us to jump in and save them from what they've created. They need to take care of it.

The member from Burlington ended her remarks saying they're doing a great job with education and that they put more funding in. Well, there are 88 schools closed since 2011 and there are 38 boards that have less funding for special education, so I don't think their track record is anything to brag about, and I certainly don't think those 38 boards with less funding are lying about it.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** It is a privilege to rise today and talk about our education system and the importance this education system has in our communities, our society and our province, and for our children. We know that our teachers do a great job. We also know that our students do a great job, and we know that parents and residents in this province are doing their very best to create the right kind of future for our children.

Parents want to see their children thrive. Students want to know they can complete school and that they can go on to university or go on to the next year. At the same time, we need a process and a system in place that respects our teachers and stays focused on what is important in this province, which is our children's education.

I believe that that's exactly what we're doing. We have a process here that is taking all of those things into account, and we've tried to make sure that we've done that, not just this year, but for many years. Since 2003, as the member from Burlington mentioned, our funding has been going up: an increase of 56% in funding since 2003 for our education system, an increase of 59% per pupil for students in this province.

What this says is that our priority is and continues to be children's education. I know this well. I know how important the work that our teachers do is, because my parents were teachers. My cousins are teachers. My aunts and uncles are teachers. My mother was voted one of Alberta's 100 most memorable teachers in the 100-year history of the ATA.

I know well how hard teachers work and how important their children's and students' education is to them and to our community. What we are doing here today is trying to make sure that we respect all the different pieces and yet still do the right thing, which is to make

sure that our children can continue in the classroom and get the education they need.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Niagara Falls. You have two minutes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I want to actually address the last speaker, from the Liberals. I can't really see that far to where she's from, but—

**Interjection:** Halton.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Halton? Well, I want to say to you, because I touched a little bit on it in my 20 minutes—you're talking about your family members being teachers. Am I correct? And you have some people who won some awards as teachers.

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** Yes.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** So I'm going to ask you a question, because your education minister said that teachers wanted to go on strike. Did any of your relatives, at one of your parties, or over lunch or a family dinner over the weekend, come to you and say, "Jeez, I wish we could go on strike"? I would be surprised if one of your family members said that. I want to make sure you know that.

**1950**

I want to say again: Who created the crisis? It was created on your side of the fence. You're responsible for the mess; nobody else—the Liberals. You made the decision. And do you know what? You could have made the right decision.

Mr. Speaker, as you told me to stay on subject—which I appreciate—I talked about Bill 22, because Bill 122 works. It can work. One of the two partners decided that Bill 122 wasn't going to work. It wasn't going to work at the local table, the master table, the national table or whatever you want to call it. Somebody decided to make sure that that process didn't work. And do you know who it was? Right over there. It was the Liberals that decided that Bill 122 wasn't going to work during the bargaining process. That's shameful. That is what the problem is today.

So I'm going to say to the Liberals—I don't want to give you a lot of advice because you're probably not going to listen anyway. But at the end of the day, if you go to the bargaining table and just do what Bill 122 was intended to do, we could get a negotiated settlement tomorrow.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The Minister of Children and Youth Services.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** And women's issues, too, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** And women's issues.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Thank you. Speaker, I'm going to share my time with the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. I know that she has some important input to provide into this debate.

I want to talk about something that really hasn't been discussed. Since we're here at night sittings, I thought I would take advantage of the opportunity to talk about what's going on with children with special needs in

school during the strike, and how pleased I am that we've been able to provide support to them.

We have children with special needs in the three school boards that have been on strike: Durham, Peel and Sudbury. We knew that labour disruption could affect them quite negatively, especially if they are used to receiving intensive supports during their school day. That's why, when we thought this labour disruption would start, my Ministry of Children and Youth Services worked very closely with the Ministry of Education to find ways to extend help to families and caregivers in the community to support those children who receive those kinds of special supports every day. Many of the parents of those children go to work, so obviously the concern was: What would happen during a labour disruption? We wanted to make sure that those children and their families could access appropriate programming or respite services or small recreational programs so that parents could continue to work and children could continue to be supported during the labour disruption.

We encouraged families to contact their regular caregiver and the school board. I want to tell you a bit about how it played out these last few weeks. The school boards in Durham, Sudbury and Peel had regular messaging on their websites. Our regional offices at children and youth had daily meetings and reports about any inquiries for support that was required for families. I'm really pleased to say that every family who requested support for their child with special needs during the labour disruptions was supported.

For example, in the east region we had 40 families to date requesting one-on-one respite workers and day program services or some sort of combination of respite and day program workers. That includes the Durham school board, as I spoke about earlier. That's where I live.

There has only been one request so far in the northern region, but the regional office had regular contact with what we call our lead agencies in the community and with the school board. Lines of communications were very open there.

In the central region, which involves Peel, Halton and Waterloo, 129 families, total, to date requested respite worker and day program service or some combination of that.

I'm just so thrilled that we were able to coordinate that kind of support for families during this labour disruption. It took a lot of calls with superintendents and school boards and our regional offices and our community partners to make sure that the needs of those children with special needs and, particularly, complex special needs were met. This is the part of the strike that hasn't been discussed.

I just want to say thank you to all of the parties that were involved in making sure those kids who have those special needs—that their lives were not unduly disrupted, that they had a program to go to, that their parents had respite. School is a form of respite. When we talk about respite services for special needs, the reality is, children who do go to school—that provides respite for families

who often have to provide care around the clock for their child. I think we can all take pride in the fact that those kids, those higher-needs children, have been well supported during this labour disruption.

Speaker, I also want to go back to the numbers, because there seems to be a lot of discussion here tonight about whether or not our government has really supported education as much as it should have. We've heard about the good test scores in our schools. We've heard about increasing graduation rates.

I know the Minister of Education has spoken about keeping funding stable at \$22.5 billion for this school year, in 2015-16. It's important to remember that that's an increase of \$8.1 billion since 2003. That's an increase, percentage-wise, of 56%.

Despite declining enrolment, which the third party is not talking about, we continue to invest in our students. The per pupil funding that I spoke about in the earlier debate has actually increased by \$4,260 to \$11,451 since 2003, an increase of 59% per pupil.

We're also making sure that those dollars are spent on priority programs that benefit children and students the most. We don't want school boards to continue to spend money and taxpayers' dollars on empty classrooms. The Minister of Education has spoken in the past about too many schools being underutilized. We know, across the province, that there are cases of schools that have been built to accommodate 600 students and only have 70 students enrolled, and there are others built to accommodate 1,000 students and only 300 are enrolled. So we are maintaining the funding, but we are looking at the most effective use of our public assets, including school space. That's why the Minister of Education acknowledged that we're helping school boards, through a \$750-million school consolidation fund, so we can make sure that our students are benefiting from safe, modern and efficient learning environments.

We are doubling funding for school renewal projects, from \$250 million to \$500 million. We know there's some backlog on some of these renewal projects, so we are addressing that, and we're building on the \$12.9-billion school infrastructure investments our government made since 2003.

I'm just sharing these stats and facts because I think they're quite important to put into some context when we talk about what's going on in the education system.

The reality is that our government continues to invest despite declining enrolment and that per pupil funding has increased by a significant amount since 2003. We want to make sure that money is being spent on the right things, to help our children learn and thrive and be successful, and we want to make sure that money is not spent where it's not really helping students achieve that goal.

Those are some of the realities of the funding situation, and I think it's a very good-news story for students and school boards in Ontario.

**2000**

While I don't love sitting in night sittings that much, I really appreciated the opportunity to tell you earlier about



what we have done to make sure our most vulnerable students, the students with special needs, are getting support and services throughout this labour disruption, and that every family who has asked for assistance has been responded to. That's something we can be very proud of.

Of course, we're monitoring what's going on at the elementary level as well. If need be, we'll continue to coordinate planning and so on. I don't want us to get ahead of ourselves, because there's no strike action, but there is the work-to-rule action.

So we are at a critical juncture this evening. Earlier this afternoon, the strikes were declared illegal by the Ontario Labour Relations Board. The Education Relations Commission ruled earlier this week that the school year is in jeopardy. My goal as Minister of Children and Youth Services, as the mother of a child with special needs and as someone who is very involved in the school system—I'm very motivated to do whatever we can to make sure that the three boards that are out get back so those kids can complete their year successfully and feel good about going into their summer vacation this summer.

With that, I'll conclude my comments. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Thank you, Speaker. I rise and I'm pleased to speak to the proposed legislation and what it's going to accomplish. The Protecting the School Year Act would, if passed, guarantee the end of labour disruptions at the secondary schools of the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District School Board and the Peel District School Board.

I'd like to begin by walking the Legislature through some of the provisions of this bill. If passed, any strike or any lockout in contravention of the act would also constitute an illegal strike or lockout under the Labour Relations Act. This would put the issue under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, a quasi-judicial body with significant enforcement remedies in the case of illegal strikes.

If the respective school boards and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation have not resolved the local issues in dispute before the day that the act receives royal assent, all outstanding local issues would immediately be referred to fair and balanced binding mediation-arbitration.

The school boards and the OSSTF would, at that point, have five days to appoint a member to a board of arbitration. If either party would fail to appoint a member within those five days, the Minister of Labour would appoint one upon the request of either party. Within 10 days of the appointment of the second member, the two members would appoint a third member to be the chair. If they fail to do so, they must notify the Minister of Labour, who would then appoint a chair.

The board of arbitration would be required to begin the mediation-arbitration proceedings within 30 days of appointment, and must make the award within 120 days

of appointment. Throughout that time, the parties will continue to have the opportunity to work on the outstanding issues with the support of the mediator-arbitrator panel. If they cannot work out those issues in the 120 days with the assistance of the panel, then the panel will provide a decision.

The arbitration award would address all matters in dispute necessary to reach a memorandum of settlement on local terms. In making the award, the board of arbitration would be required to take into consideration certain criteria, including the employers' ability to pay and the economic situation in Ontario. The school boards and the OSSTF would then be required to share the cost of the mediation-arbitration.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that on this side of the House we respect collective bargaining, and we want to assure the member that nothing in the act would prohibit the boards and the union from continuing to bargain. In fact, the government's position is that we encourage them to sit at the bargaining table and resolve all issues through negotiation. And if all the parties resolve their issues in dispute, they would be required to inform the mediator-arbitrator, and the mediation-arbitration process would then be terminated.

Speaker, we do believe it would be best for the parties to reach an agreement and achieve a quick ending to their labour negotiations. We want school boards and their employees to be able to negotiate fair and reasonable contracts, but this must be done without jeopardizing the education of students. Like parents, our government does not want children's education further disrupted because of this dispute. We want Ontario students to benefit from time in their classrooms with their teachers so they can fulfill their potential and learn in one of the best education systems in the world. That is why we're continuing to put students first by introducing the proposed Protecting the School Year Act.

I want to talk about all of this in human terms. What does all of this legislation mean? At the centre of it all are our kids and parents. Let me tell you the story of one of my constituents, Vandana. She came to meet with me during constituency week. She came to my office with four other parents, and this is what she said: "My son is in grade 11." I said, "Well, if he's in grade 11, you have nothing to worry about because university applications are for kids in grade 12, so you should be okay." She said, "No, I'm worried because my son didn't do well in his January exams and we were hoping he would make up his marks later in the term. If he doesn't have this opportunity"—because, as we all know, when you go to university, they look at your grade 11 marks in addition to your grade 12 marks. Her son wants to go into engineering college. She was so concerned, so stressed, that now her son, who was hoping that he would be able to make up his marks on another exam, might lose the opportunity, that she was in tears. She said, "Is there anything you can do to get the teachers back?"

That is what we are really talking about behind all of this talk. I hear the opposition constantly talk about, "We

care about children's education," and constantly try to blame us, suggesting that somehow we are cutting education. But when they have the opportunity to help mothers like Vandana, when they had the opportunity on Monday and this morning to give us unanimous consent so that we could have speeded up this process and sent our kids back to school so that Vandana's son could have had another chance at taking an exam, what did the NDP do, Speaker? They kept saying no, no, no. What are you going to say to Vandana? How are you going to defend your position when you had the opportunity to send our children back to school and all you did was say no, no, no? So I submit that at the heart of this bill is the well-being of our children. I know this.

I have this email, and I would like the opportunity—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would warn the member that devices are not allowed in the chamber while you're speaking.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Okay, how about I do this? I'm just reading an email, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** You're not allowed to read from your device. Stop the clock. I will reiterate to you: The rules are that while you're debating, you're not allowed to use devices or props.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** You can use pieces of paper.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I know, but—that's okay.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to paraphrase. She just sent me an email thanking us and saying, "Thank you so much." I'm paraphrasing. "Premier Wynne and you have heard my concerns, and I am so happy that my kids are going to go back to school." I don't believe the members opposite are going to get these kinds of emails from their parents, because what are you going to say to your parents when they're going to ask you, "What did you do when you had the opportunity to send our kids back to school?" All you did was say no, no, no. That's your record. Shame on you.

2010

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is a pleasure to join the debate tonight. I have breaking news: About three hours ago, the Ontario Labour Relations Board of Ontario, of this great province, said that the strike that was ongoing in three different school boards across the province was deemed unlawful. Therefore, this legislation that we are debating—I want to apprise the government House leader and the government whip and everyone on the government side that it is moot.

In addition to that, I would also like to inform the New Democratic Party, the third party, that as they continue to debate this legislation, they are in fact supporting an illegal strike, an unlawful strike, a strike deemed by the Ontario Labour Relations Board as unlawful. And here you are supporting it.

I do have one final question, Speaker: Given that this is a piece of legislation that effectively is not in order, that is irrelevant, does it mean, when two ministers of the

crown debate irrelevant legislation, that they too are in fact irrelevant?

Speaker, at the end of the day, I think what ought to be happening today is that the New Democrats and the Liberals act like the adults I know they can be and remove this legislation from the floor of this assembly and celebrate the fact that kids in three different school boards across Ontario will be back in their classrooms. Gosh.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** We're not going to take any lessons from the PC caucus on public education funding. The system has yet to still recover from the \$2 billion that you removed from it—seriously, no lessons coming from that side.

It is true, though, that the government who introduced this piece of legislation to the floor could remove this piece of legislation. But they seem dead set on legislating over negotiating. They have a majority. They could do whatever they want, Mr. Speaker, as you know—and they have been. They've been promising to sell off and move forward with the privatization of Hydro One. They've assumed that teachers in the province of Ontario, through this pseudo-collective bargaining process that they created—and made promises about public education and transit and infrastructure and everything else. They are doing whatever they want. They could remove this piece of legislation from the floor, but they are still set on moving forward and accusing those who actually are committed to advocating for public education of not operating in good faith, when really it is the government that was supposed to come to that table in good faith. When people negotiate in good faith, you get solutions. The solutions were not to be found in this process.

The last delegation that we heard in the budget committee this year was an occasional teacher from the Parry Sound-Muskoka area. She talked about 30 students in her full-day kindergarten program. She talked about removing special education students from the education system because they don't have the resources to deal with them. That is the reality.

New Democrats are standing up in this House and speaking the truth about public education. Liberals don't want to hear it. They don't want to hear it. They want to legislate, and they're willing to stay till midnight to make sure that it happens.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It gives me great pleasure to add my voice to the debate. I'm probably the only member in this House who has had children continuously in school in Cambridge and in Waterloo region since 1988. Our oldest was in grade 3 when we moved to Cambridge, and currently I still have one in grade 12, and I have one in grade 6 today, and many more who are out the other end. So I think I can add a voice of experience here.

Going back to what the member from Newmarket-Aurora said, I had a school strike in grade 13, when I was



in Toronto. We were out for almost two and a half months, and it did put our school year in jeopardy. We in grade 13 had difficulty achieving success in our applications to universities and colleges in that particular year, and that hurt my own education. I was much more limited in finding an ability to get a spot in nursing school.

I also wanted to talk about my daughter, who started high school in 1999, the year that she was a double cohort in grade 12, and under a new curriculum. There were no textbooks in the schools for grade 9 students in the year 1999; not enough school desks, either. And that's incredibly different from today. So when we look at education today and the funding that we have for our students today, I have that experience for many decades to know that we're doing better.

This debate tonight should be about the students and making sure they get back to school. This government's top priority is the future of our students and ensuring that they can get and reclaim their year. The legislation is here tonight to make sure that those who are in jeopardy actually finish their school year. We need to pass this bill in order to make sure that our students can return to school. Everything else that we've been debating tonight is not focusing on that. We need our kids back in school. We need to pass this bill tonight.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have to admit, I'm confused. I'm in a situation here. On the one hand, we've got the Liberal government that insists on retaining a bill in the Legislature that, according to what the labour relations board has said, is redundant; it's unnecessary. You've got the New Democrats, who want to continue to debate that redundant bill and support a strike that has been determined is illegal. And right in the middle, you've got the common-sense Conservatives, who are saying: What the heck is going on here? What is going on here?

I have always taken the position that if you want to have me working at night, at least let my time be productive. I'm asking how many bills and how many debates we could be having that are absolutely necessary when we have this little cat-and-mouse, tit-for-tat game going on across the aisle here. The New Democrats don't want to give in to the Liberals and the Liberals certainly don't want to give in to the New Democrats. So it's like this little impasse: "Are you going to give up?" "No, I'm not going to give up. What about you?" "No way." It's like a little game. We've got a piece of legislation that is now unnecessary, and a party that wants to debate about supporting a strike that has now been determined to be illegal. So what I would say is, we are setting one hell of a bad example here this evening. We're supposed to have our children in school. That's what we want to do. The children should be the priority. I sure hope that none of those students who have been out of school for six weeks is watching this sideshow tonight.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** I am delighted to respond to all of my colleagues who took the time to address this bill. I just want to start by saying, Speaker, that today is a good day for Ontario, particularly a good day for Peel, because I understand that school is actually going to be back tomorrow, Wednesday. I am absolutely delighted that all the kids in Peel, Durham and Rainbow district are going to be finally back to school.

I know that parents like Vandana are heaving a sigh of relief that her son—I can just about imagine the families in Mississauga right now, Speaker, excited that school is back, packing their school bags, getting organized after, I think, four weeks of not going to school, and getting back to school. But mostly I know that Vandana right now is thinking that her son is, after all, going to get a second chance. And if he gets into engineering college, I hope she will remember to call me and let me know that he did get in, that he did get a second chance to improve his marks.

Mr. Speaker, I am also confused, like the member from Pembroke—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. That's something I'm not confused about: the great people I represent.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** —Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. The reason I'm confused is that I still don't understand why the NDP doesn't see the light of day, why they continue to stubbornly defend an illegal strike. It's one thing to be against Liberals; that's fine. But it's another thing to be against the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision. It's another thing to be against parents and kids. So I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, why they don't see the light of day. And I don't understand why the Conservatives don't understand that, understand that, notwithstanding the good news today, we need this bill. The reason we need this bill is to ensure that there is no further labour disruption in these three boards.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great day for Mississauga.

2020

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Indeed it is an honour to be able to stand in this House and bring the voices from Windsor-Tecumseh to this debate.

I just heard that we're defending an illegal strike. We're not; we're speaking to a piece of legislation that the Liberals have on the table. We don't think it's a great piece of legislation. We think they screwed up the entire bargaining process, and they should be reminded of that.

Let me say once again that no one in the NDP caucus wants to put children at risk or wants to risk the school year.

**Hon. Dipika Damerla:** Why didn't you say yes, then?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** With all due respect, you have the piece of legislation on the table. Part of democracy is that the role of the opposition is to comment on your proposed legislation. That's what we're doing.

Once upon a time, way back in the dark, dark days of the Common Sense Revolution, there was an education minister who made quite a splash when he was caught on video ruminating about creating a “useful crisis” in education. I don’t even have to mention his name, because it was mentioned earlier, but I know that the member from Mississauga—Streetsville knows him well, because he ran against him and lost in 1999—but I digress.

A useful crisis in education—oh, how the wheels of history keep on turning. That Conservative crisis in education led to Bill 160, which introduced us to standardized testing, a cut in teacher prep time, and allowed the government of the day to determine the number of pupils in a classroom.

If you fast-forward to fall 2012, to Bill 115, when the Liberals demonized education workers and stripped them of their collective bargaining agreements—oh, sure, there was a brief kiss-and-make-up as we got close to the last election, but now we find ourselves here tonight at 8:20 with the same government sticking it once again to education workers, Ontario’s students and Ontario families.

Another crisis in education: Why? Because it’s politically expedient. The government holds the cards. They stacked the deck. They dealt the hands. They knew that the ante was just too rich for the educators. There were too many strips, too many take-aways. You can’t win the hand if someone has taken away all of your chips.

The government has the chips—big ones—on their shoulders. That’s right; they have a huge chip on their shoulder. They want to demonize education workers yet again for political gain. All we have heard from this government up until now has been, “Hey, we’re hands-off. Let them negotiate at the local table. Negotiating is the way to go.” Now they’re burying their heads in the sand for weeks. They want to wash their hands of the problem. The minister pointed across the aisle and said, “Now it’s up to you”—threw up her hands. “Now it’s up to you. This is on you. We’re washing our hands of this mess.”

The Liberals created a crisis in education, and now they want us to solve their problem for the minister. They have a majority government, Speaker. They can do whatever they want to do, and they can do it whenever they want to do it. They have the majority of votes, but no, that’s not the politically expedient way, because they want to play the blame game. The government screwed this up, and now all of a sudden they need a fall guy, so they want to blame someone. Why not blame the NDP? Heck, why not? The NDP is coming up in the polls; they’re going down. “Let’s blame the NDP.” We didn’t create this crisis in education. We weren’t at the bargaining table. Don’t be blaming us for your screw-ups.

They want to turn the channel, Speaker. They want to skip down that yellow brick road singing a different tune. Instead of “Somewhere over the rainbow,” they’re going to be singing:

“Nowhere over the Rainbow board, Durham and, yes, Peel,

“We can’t find a settlement, we can’t sign a deal.

“So we’ll reach out across the floor to our friends in blue and legislate a deal just for them and you.

“Someday over the rainbow, bluebirds fly,

“The Liberals called this back-to-work tune; the Tories cried, why can’t I? Why, oh, why can’t I?”

I don’t want to cut in and break up these two dancing partners. The ones in red have the votes; they don’t even need the ones in blue. But wait a minute; maybe they’re not the real red birds after all. Maybe this dance is between the bluebirds and the even bluer bluebirds, the old crisis-in-education birds and the new crisis-in-education birds; birds of a feather. Chaos in education, Speaker? “No worries. We’ll invoke time allocation.”

The Liberals and the Conservatives have changed the channel together. Think about it for a moment: No more talk about selling 60% of hydro. “We’ve changed the channel. We’re going to sell hydro. We didn’t consult the people of Ontario about it. We didn’t make it absolutely clear during the last campaign. We didn’t spell it out clearly in the budget”—smoke and mirrors. They’re changing the channel; they’re resetting the agenda, taking the sting out of all that sharp criticism from the hundreds of thousands of residents of Ontario who feel they’ve been had, tricked, misled, hit with that old bait-and-switch routine, silenced for the time being, because the Liberals ran out the clock. They played around instead of actually bargaining. They created a crisis of timing—another Liberal-government-crafted crisis in education. And now we’re here saying: Shame on you for playing with the lives of the students, their parents, their families, and messing with the careers and the livelihoods of education workers yet again. You knew this was coming. You egged them on. You said the teachers wanted to be on strike. What complete and utter nonsense.

Speaker, I’ve been there. I bargained once for 18 months and then got locked out for two months. Let me tell you, nobody wants to be on a picket line, be it a strike or a lockout. Look at the poor souls, the Steelworkers—and I say to the labour minister that the Steelworkers, who have been out for, what, almost two years—

**Interjection:** Twenty-one months.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** —21 months at the Crown Holdings beverage can factory in the GTA—that’s where the labour minister should be bringing in back-to-work legislation. The minister may remember that last fall we spoke about this face to face, and I urged him then to do something about it. I urged him before Christmas to find a solution, nearly six months ago, and very little or nothing was done.

It’s a sad, sad day in this province when the bullies gang up on the innocent. One year you cancel the contracts of education workers, impose a settlement, demonize them, make them out to be the bad guys, and then you say, “Oh, I’m sorry. It’ll never happen again.” No, not until it’s politically expedient, like now.

**2030**

Fix the system. Learn your lesson. Don’t keep on playing the same old tune. Quit demonizing education workers. Treat them with the respect they deserve. They’re the



professionals. Treat them like professionals and bargain with them fairly.

**Negotiations:** The Premier used to know this—used to: Negotiations are about give and take and compromise. You don't change the rules of the game in mid-stream. All of this could have been avoided if you would have come to the bargaining table with an open mind and a sincere willingness to seek a compromise. You didn't do that, and then you ran out the clock and created a crisis in education. This is nothing to be proud of; instead, it's something to be ashamed of. I say to those who may be viewing at home at this hour: Don't be blaming the education workers; blame the government. They didn't play fair. They wanted this confrontation. They needed this confrontation to take your mind off of their horrendous budget proposals.

They have no right to sell 60% of Hydro One. They didn't ask your permission to do that. You own Hydro One, not the Liberal Party of Ontario. Their friends in the banking and investment sectors are going to make bundles of money and you're going to be paying higher rates.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** A point of order, the member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I was very much enjoying the member's dissertation on Bill 103 until he digressed to a topic nowhere near close to the subject of the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for your point of order. I'm listening very carefully, and I'll ask the member to continue.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I wonder why they're so sensitive about talking about selling Hydro One.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I'm just trying to help.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you. Here's a system, Hydro One, that returns \$300 million of revenue a year, money that could be used for education, money that could improve the system. Instead, they're going to give it to their banker friends for profit.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Eight hundred million.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Eight hundred million; I'm sorry. Eight hundred million a year comes back. It could be used for education, and instead they're going to sell Hydro One to their banker buddies and we're going to pay higher rates. That is part of this equation.

Don't be fooled by this gang of profiteers. Don't be misled about why the Liberals created this crisis in education. They have a majority government; they think they can dictate whatever they want. They seem to forget that they have to answer at some point to the taxpayers, the voters. As I said before, no one wants to see a school year lost.

Speaker, you may remember Brian Mulroney 25 years ago. He admitted to deliberately waiting to the very last minute to roll the dice on the Meech Lake Accord, and he lost.

Now the OLRB has stepped in. This was what has happened here: They waited to the very last minute. This was like a—no, not even a Liberal plan B—this is a plan D: designed for failure. They wanted this. They put the

school year at risk. They bumbled and fumbled about. They have no integrity left. They rolled the dice and they came up snake eyes.

It should be clear to everyone that this Liberal government has no respect for the collective bargaining process. They have no respect for students, no respect for their families and no respect for teachers. I doubt they even respect themselves after the way they screwed up the education file this time.

Class sizes are at the heart of this manufactured crisis. Future students won't get the attention they deserve with larger classes. Kids with challenges who need special education will not receive the attention they need and deserve with the cuts this government is making to education. Nearly 40 school boards will get less money next year for their special education needs. The government has closed nearly 90 schools in the last four years, and there are more to come.

I get part of it, at least: Student enrolment is down. I get that part, but you don't have to close every school. You can turn them into community hubs. You can bring in service clubs and health clinics, and keep the schools open and keep the kids in classrooms.

Schools are the heart of a community. In rural Ontario, a lot of schools are closing. The Liberals said at one time that they would protect rural schools. Rural schools are defined by how far it is from one school to the next—say it's five kilometres.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The same as hospitals.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** The same as hospitals.

Instead, now they've expanded that boundary to 10 kilometres or more. So many school boards that used to have rural schools that had to be protected and kept open don't have them anymore because that boundary, that distance from school to school, has been enlarged so much they don't qualify under what they used to qualify, and they can be closed. I say: Shame on that.

Think about this just for a moment: I don't know if anyone has brought this up before or not, Minister, but all that money that was spent on the renovations at schools for all-day kindergarten—millions of dollars just a couple of years ago—and now you're closing a lot of the schools where you spent all that money. No, somebody wasn't thinking right there. It's not something to be proud of. Enlarging class size is not something to be proud of either.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** The Liberals do well; they waste a lot of money.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Yes, they do waste a lot of money, don't they, these Liberals?

Teachers know their students; they know their needs. They are the professionals—the highly trained and educated professionals, and many of them have specialized skills. They shape and mould our children and our grandchildren. They help them work through their problems. They help them learn by their mistakes.

What does this Liberal government do? It does not learn by its mistakes. They find problems and make them worse. That's the scary thing: They make them worse.

They're making sure there will be years and years of unrest in the education sector. That's no way to create good policy. That's no way to treat your professionals. It's certainly no way to gain respect. That's not what integrity is all about. That's no way to run a province.

Seriously, folks, you're not building Ontario up. With this kind of action, you're tearing Ontario down. You're running it into the ground. Learn by your mistakes. Learn how to bargain. Learn how to compromise. Learn how to work well with others. How many report cards—"Johnny knows how to work well with others. Johnny plays well with others." Give education workers the professional courtesy they deserve and the respect they deserve.

Speaker, don't let anyone fool you. The New Democrats did not create chaos in the education system. We did not create crisis in the education system. This was solely manufactured by the Liberal government. They left it to the last minute. They're looking for a bailout; they're looking for a fall guy. They want to blame somebody, and, of course, we're the third party—why not pick on the little guy, you bunch of bullies? We didn't create the crisis.

Teachers didn't create the crisis in education either. Yet the teachers are the ones who have been left behind to handle crisis after crisis that the Liberals have left in their wake.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** And the school boards.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** The school boards are left holding the can. They're carrying the can for these guys.

You're too willing to take the easy way out; to roll the dice and hope for the best. You're gambling away Ontario's future. You say you want to improve the education system; you're destroying it. Turn underused schools into community hubs. The communities have paid for those schools time and time again. Like Hydro One, schools belong to the taxpayers of Ontario. Keep them open. Keep hydro in public hands. Do not increase class sizes for our students. That's at the heart of this discussion. Don't try to balance your budget on the backs of students, parents, teachers and all education workers. We're dealing with future generations here.

2040

Stand up for your children and your grandchildren. Stand up for education. Fix the system. Don't throw up your hands, point across the aisle and say, "It's up to you." Don't be blaming others for your own incompetence. Get back to the bargaining table. Get serious about negotiating a new agreement, one that all sides can live with, and do it now. It might take a day or two, but it will be well worth it.

Thank you for your time and your—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to respond to the member from Windsor-Tecumseh. I enjoyed his references to the Wizard of Oz. I did notice that he has a slight resemblance to Frank Morgan, who played the wizard. But I'm actually thinking more about Winnie-

the-Pooh. He's sounding a bit like Eeyore, because things are really bad and really dark.

But if creating a crisis in education is smaller class sizes, well, then I'm okay with that. If it's higher scores on tests, then I'm okay with that. If it's more students graduating, then I'm okay with that. So I don't think that is a crisis. The investments that we've had in education over the last 10 or 12 years have been significant and have made a difference in people's lives.

We were talking about grandchildren. We're going to have a grandchild sometime, I think, within the next 24 hours. We've been waiting for a couple of days. So education is important to all of us.

I am proud of the investments that we've made, and I'm proud that we continued to invest when we found ourselves in the middle of an economic crisis. What we all need to remember, with all due respect, is that we have been borrowing in the neighbourhood of \$10 billion to \$12 billion to \$14 billion a year since about 2008-09, and we have to get to balance. So unless there's a magic money tree here that we all don't know about, we have to bargain within certain constraints. What we've had is a ruling, which is a ruling that has occurred under different governments—and I know that on the other side of the aisle, the third party has supported back-to-work legislation for garbage workers.

I think we have to work in the interests of children.

I respect the member for Windsor-Tecumseh and very much look forward to his response to my response.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** I just want to say thank you so much to the Liberal caucus for joining me on the Progressive Conservative side here today. There's one thing: We don't agree on a lot of things, but what we do agree on tonight, in the official opposition and in the government, is that the New Democrats are standing here defending an illegal strike. They want to, for example, talk about the fact that this is about a crisis that the government has created. No offence to you or to anybody else, but I'm actually going to try, for once in my life, to defend them. I'll try. It's going to be very, very difficult after nine years here. Yasir Naqvi is keeling over right now.

I will say this to you all: The government of Ontario has not forced anyone out on an illegal strike. People walked off the job, and the Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled that the action was illegal. This happened almost three and a half hours ago, so it's not new information. I've seen it on Twitter. In fact, I've tweeted about it myself. We'll see it in the newspaper. I'm sure it's on CP24 as we speak.

So I would suggest to the members of the third party who want to continue to debate a bill that is really meaningless and irrelevant, that it's not really in their best interests to defend illegal and unlawful activity and actions in the province of Ontario despite the fact that the Ontario Labour Relations Board has ruled that it was actually unlawful.



It's really good to see you, Todd. I was all by myself here.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** It's great to be here. I'm glad to be here to support you.

**Mrs. Lisa MacLeod:** As I conclude, I might just suggest to the members of the third party that they consider that illegal action that they're defending.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order. Questions and comments.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** It's intriguing, both to hear my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh and my colleague from Nepean–Carleton. She has demonstrated the ongoing co-operation between the Liberals and the Conservatives in this matter and I have to say, frankly, that my voters would be very impressed to see that. I want to make sure they'll know that this alliance is strong and healthy.

If, in fact, the OLRB ruling has made the bill irrelevant, the one that's on the floor, then—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. I've tolerated a little bit of the going back and forth, and I think we're now getting really out of control. I might have to bring you in line. I'd ask everybody to try and respect the Speaker.

The member for Toronto–Danforth.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Thank you, Speaker. As I was saying, I think that if, in fact, the government and their newfound allies, the Conservatives, believe that this matter has been settled, then I call on the government to withdraw the bill. I think that we could go on to other legislation or spend a pleasant evening with friends and family.

The speaker, my colleague from Windsor–Tecumseh, was dead-on in his comments. We have a mess in education. The government has been cutting its corporate tax revenues for years—shortfalls in billions of dollars in our budget. They boast about it in their budget documents. After a while, if you cut your revenue enough, you start having problems. You stop having the money you need to run an education system, a health care system, a transit system, a road system.

This government is engaged in an austerity approach to public funding that generates conflict in our public services. No one should be surprised that we have a mess on our hands. You can only cut your bills for so long before you hit the wall.

This government did not resolve the funding formula problems that it inherited from the Mike Harris government. It put money into the education budget for some of its promises and didn't resolve the core problems. Until that's done, we will continue to have these conflicts in our schools.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It gives me great pleasure to rise in this House and speak on behalf of the students in Ontario and, more importantly, my own sons. I know that

our government is always concerned when our students are out of the schools and out of the classroom and not learning. Let me tell you that if my kids have a dentist appointment and I need to pull them out that half-hour earlier, they're begging me to change that dentist appointment because they want to be in the classrooms. That's where the teachers also want to be; they want to be in the classrooms.

That's why our government asked the Education Relations Commission to advise whether the school year was in jeopardy, given the fact that we have secondary students in Durham, Sudbury and Peel whose school year was in jeopardy. In light of this advice, we introduced legislation that would have put students back in the classroom today, had the NDP agreed to unanimous consent for speedy passage. Unfortunately, that didn't happen.

This legislation is designed to get those 72,000 students back into the classroom so that they can complete their studies. We didn't take this decision lightly, and we are focused on ensuring that we are doing everything possible to mitigate the impact of these strikes on students and their futures.

I just want to comment a little bit about what the member opposite—from Windsor–Tecumseh, I believe it was—said with regard to our schools and the fact that some of them are underutilized and perhaps that they should be used as community hubs. I'm very proud of the work that our Premier, Kathleen Wynne, has done in trying to address the specific issue and that we have in place right now an advisory council headed by Karen Pitre that is looking specifically at different schools, at their utilization rates, at how they can be used to serve the community as community hubs.

I'm very proud that one of the schools that is being looked at is in my riding. It was used very recently in CivicAction workshops. I'm very proud to know that we are looking at schools and we are looking to have them be used as community hubs.

I'm very proud as well that our government continues to invest in education and that we will continue—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

I now recognize the member for Windsor–Tecumseh. You have two minutes for your reply.

**2050**

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** First, let me say to my friend from Ottawa South, who's about to become a grandparent: Congratulations. There's nothing like it. I wish you all the best with it.

I'll give a shout-out to my grandkids tonight: Paisley, Arwen, Fletcher and Katana. I know they're not watching. If they're up this late, they're watching Treehouse; they're certainly not watching anything on this channel tonight.

You did talk about money and education. It has to be spent wisely. When you go to the bargaining table—I get it; you don't want to put any money on the table—but you shouldn't be going in saying, "Oh, by the way, we're going to increase your class sizes while we're here."

The member for Nepean–Carleton proves that old adage about politics making for strange bedfellows. She had two Liberals standing beside her while she made her presentation tonight and said something good about the government for the first time in nine years. I thought that was kind of cute. Of course, she had the Liberals on her side because for most of her caucus it's past their bedtime and they left for parts unknown.

My friend from Toronto–Danforth, thank you so much for your support in this bill. You're right. You hearken back to the dark, dark old days of the Common Sense Revolution and what they did to education. The funding has not been recovered for education since those days.

The member from Willowdale—I'm sorry; Danforth.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Davenport.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Davenport—lives in Willowdale, represents Davenport. I get confused with these ridings. It's Toronto. I get it; thank you. Yes, community hubs may be the answer to saving a lot of our community schools. I certainly look forward to hearing more about that in the days to come.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate? The government House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for recognizing me to give me an opportunity to talk about Bill 103. I've been hearing the debate in the House, and there are some serious points that have been made in the House on this bill and some not-so-serious points. That's totally fine, but I think I want to spend my 20 minutes while talking to the bill to come to the most important point: Why are we here debating Bill 103? What is the purpose behind Bill 103? To me, the essence of Bill 103 is our children and their well-being by making sure that they have the best education available to them. That is why we're debating Bill 103. It is about our children. It is about our education system, which includes our excellent teachers, parents, and other staff in our schools, which has made Ontario an envy in the world.

I bring to this debate my personal perspective. Many of you have heard me say in this House before that I'm a child of immigrants. I came to this great country and this amazing province at age 15. In fact, I was a month shy of being a 16-year-old. Many people think I was born in Canada, but I was almost a 16-year-old. The main desire, the main purpose for my parents to make a very difficult decision to change countries, to come to a country like Canada, was so that their three children could receive the best education in the world—right, Speaker? They knew that if their children could get the best education in the world, they would be able to do whatever they want to. I have this great privilege today as the member of provincial Parliament for the great community of Ottawa Centre, a minister in Premier Wynne's government and government House leader because of the education I received.

The reason we're here today, the reason we're debating this bill, is that we want more children just like me, and everybody in this House, to have those opportunities available to them. And they will have those opportunities

available to them only if they are in classrooms getting their education. That is why we're standing here today debating this bill late in the night.

All joking aside, all calling names aside, all partisan debate aside, let's not forget our purpose in being here. At least for me—and I can speak for my colleagues on this side of the House, on the government side of the House—it is for those 70,000 children who are not in the classrooms right now. We want to make sure that they are in school.

I know that teachers—whom we have a lot of respect for—and other workers in the school system want exactly the same thing: They want to be in school as well because they want to teach and they want to be with the children because that's what they're best at and that's what they're trained for, and we respect them, we salute them and we support them in that. That is why we're standing here.

All the rhetoric aside, let's not forget our aim: We got into public service so we can have great public institutions. I got into public service so that we have a great public education system. This education system gives opportunities to kids like myself and many other children in all our communes to be who they want to be. The reason that I am a proud Liberal and I have put my name three times on the ballot as a member of the Ontario Liberal Party is because this party and this government believes in education and believes in investing in education.

Speaker, if you look at what we have been able to accomplish since 2003—almost 13 years now—it's incredible when it comes to the education sector. We have invested billions of dollars to make our education system an envy of the world. The result is that our education system is ranked top five in the world.

As many of you probably speak to your friends and colleagues in other parts of the world, I'm sure you get the same questions as I do: "How have you built such an amazing education system? How come your students are so successful? How come we meet Ontarians and Canadians in different parts of the world who are so well established and are professionals? And they received—what—public education?"

It's because we have invested in our education system. Over the last 13 years under the Liberal government, both under Premier McGuinty and now Premier Wynne, we have ensured that our schools, our teachers, our education support workers are the best supported in all of Canada, in all of North America and, in fact, around the world. That's why we decided to invest in full-day kindergarten: Make sure that we give our children the best start from the moment they go to school, from junior kindergarten from age four.

I have a three-year-old son—a lot of people hear stories about Rafi from me—and I just cannot wait for Rafi to go to school starting in September 2016. I cannot wait for Rafi to attend full-day kindergarten in one of our neighbourhood schools because I know that he is going to excel. I know he's going to get an amazing education



from incredible teachers and support workers in his school. That is why I'm standing here along with my colleagues to make sure that we continue to provide those opportunities to other students.

**2100**

Similarly, we have worked hard to keep our class sizes smaller. We have worked extremely hard to increase our graduation rate. We have an over 80% graduation rate in Ontario. Imagine that: an over 80% graduation rate. What a great success. Our numbers of high school graduates going to post-secondary institutions, like our colleges and universities, are at an historical high. As a result, our universities and colleges are growing. We continue to build them more and more. Just most recently, the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities announced a new campus with York University in Markham. Imagine that: We are the kind of government that is investing more money building new schools and new universities and new colleges so there are more opportunities for our young people when they come out of high school to go to university. This is the kind of government that we are part of, that puts education front and centre as part of our economic agenda. We know that our economic well-being, our prosperity, lies in having a good education system, and our young people are successful as a result of this.

Despite enrolment rates going down—and don't take my word for it; the numbers are out there. You can see that enrolment numbers came down, because our demographic has gone down; we have fewer children—we didn't start spending less money as a result of this. In fact, you see the line of investment actually continuing to go up. So despite the fact that there are fewer children in the system, the per pupil funding has increased by over 50%. Where we used to spend about \$6,000 per pupil, now we spend \$10,000 to \$11,000 per pupil in our system, and that has only happened during the Liberal government, first under the leadership of Premier McGuinty and now the leadership of Premier Wynne. We are very proud of that.

I'm from Ottawa, so I will speak a little bit about Ottawa. Similarly, I look at the boards in Ottawa. We have four very strong, vibrant boards, English and French. Funding in our school boards in Ottawa since 2003 has gone up by over 55%—over 55%. We have been building new schools in every part of the city: in Ottawa Centre, in Ottawa—Orléans, in Ottawa—Vanier, in Ottawa South, in Nepean—Carleton, in Carleton—Mississippi Mills, in Ottawa West—Nepean—every single riding. In every single riding we have built new schools to create more opportunities for our children.

*Interjection.*

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Those members who are heckling on the other side actually are on the record praising this Liberal government, like the member from Kitchener—Waterloo, who used to praise this government—

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member from Kitchener—Waterloo will come to order. This is her last warning.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** —and she can't deny that anymore because it's on the record. She used to boast—I remember meeting with her many, many times when she was the chair of the Ontario public school boards and she used to praise our government and how much we have done for our school system. I thank her for that. It's okay; her views may have changed now. But I thank her for recognizing the kinds of investments we've made in our schools.

I look at my riding. I would be remiss if I did not speak a little bit about the kind of investment we're seeing in Ottawa Centre. For example, I'll mention three schools which have been amazing. Remember, I have the downtown riding. A lot of my schools are now actually celebrating their centennials; they're over 100 years old. Most recently, Elgin Street Public School celebrated their 100th anniversary—a small, beautiful downtown school right on Elgin Street. Connaught Public School in Hintonburg also celebrated its centennial, which was amazing, to see graduates from previous years coming. Last summer we had a great celebration at St. George elementary school as well. We celebrated its 100th anniversary. So I have a great privilege of having schools that are fairly old but full of history, full of charm, and incredible stories come out of those schools.

We are continuing to invest in schools in the downtown core to make sure these schools remain vibrant, because my community continues to grow. I know it's the same thing in Ottawa—Vanier, the Attorney General's riding. More and more people choose to live in the downtown community. That's why I was very proud, when I was first elected in 2007, that one of the very first announcements—and I was so happy at that time because, as I mentioned earlier, one of the big reasons I got into public service was because I wanted to promote education—that I got to make, and the member for Ottawa—Vanier helped me so much with that, was on a \$5-million extension to St. Francis of Assisi Catholic school—

**Hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** A wonderful school.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** —the only French elementary school in my riding. I'm very proud of them, right in Hintonburg. St. Francis of Assisi built a beautiful new addition so, again, in that growing school the children can have more opportunity. I want to give a big salute to Diane Doré, a very good friend who is a trustee and former chair of the French Catholic school board, a great champion of education. We worked very well together. Madame Meilleur introduced me to Madame Doré, and we continued to work together to make sure that we are promoting French education in the downtown community of Ottawa Centre.

Most recently, in the community of the Glebe in my riding, we are investing \$4.6 million in building a brand new addition to Mutchmor Public School. Mutchmor Public School is also over 100 years old, and it's growing. It was a great community-led initiative where the community worked with our school board and myself, as the member of provincial Parliament, and the

Ministry of Education. We were able to get \$4.6-million funding to build a new, permanent addition to Mutchmor Public School. It's almost done. I was there last Saturday at the Great Glebe Garage Sale and I made sure that I would go by the school to see how the construction is coming along. It's almost ready to go, and we're looking forward to welcoming more children in September to the school.

Most importantly, most recently in the neighbourhood of Westboro that I have the opportunity to represent, we, as a provincial government, announced almost close to \$10 million, along with the school board, to build a brand new Broadview Public School. Broadview Public School has been there since the early 1920s, and you can tell a new school is needed. You couldn't really refurbish that school. Parents worked very hard to make sure that we actually secured funding to build a brand new school. Shovels will be going into the ground very soon, and the plan and the school will be all done and ready to go in September of 2016.

All of this speaks to our government's commitment to quality education. All of this speaks to our belief in the potential of our children and how we want to make sure that our children are successful by getting the best education. All of this speaks to our confidence in our amazing teachers and their value, and how they share their training and their education and their values with our children. All of this is a demonstration of the belief of our support workers and the heart and soul that they put into our education system because it is that village that helps grow the children in our community.

That is why we're not cutting education funding. We are continuing to invest in our education system. Yes, these are tough economic times, but our priorities remain with health care and education. That's why we continue to invest in education.

I'm really proud to support Bill 91, which is part of the budget. Why? Because in that budget we are investing \$11 billion over the next decade to build and rebuild local schools—\$11 billion over the next 10 years. That is going to result in building new schools or rebuilding schools in every single one of our ridings, in all communities from all three political parties. Why? Because we want to give our children a good opportunity to learn.

That's what this debate is about. That's why we are here today, late in the evening, talking about Bill 103. It is about our education system. It is about protecting the gains we have made in our system. It is about making sure that our children—70,000 of them in this instance, in Durham, Peel and the Sudbury area—who need to be back in school because we don't want to jeopardize their school year. We want to make sure that they're able to graduate by the middle of June and are then able to pursue the opportunities they want to pursue. A lot of those students are in grade 12, Speaker. They have the great possibility, the great opportunity in September to be in a college or a university. We cannot rob that from them.

2110

The opposition, especially the third party, is going to make it all about labour relations and all about strikes and this and that. Yes, that is part of the dynamic, and nobody is saying that we will not continue to negotiate. The Premier has been absolutely clear and the Minister of Education has been absolutely clear that we will continue to negotiate, that there is an agreement to be reached at the table. We firmly believe in collective bargaining, and we will continue to do so. But this bill is about making sure that our children are also getting an education at the same time and that their academic year is not being jeopardized.

So I really urge the members in this House—first, thank you for listening to why I'm here today, why I'm standing in this Legislature, how I have benefited from this great education system, and how my community continues to thrive because of the investments that we have made over the last 13 years in our education system. I urge all of you to support this bill, to really contribute to this debate in terms of talking about the value of education. At the end of the day, partisanship aside, we really all—I have that belief, in every single one of us—believe in our kids. We believe in our children, and we want to make sure that they are successful. That is why I urge you to support Bill 103, so we can ensure that our children are back in classrooms and are able to graduate come the middle of June.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is a pleasure to once again join the debate on this piece of redundant legislation that is unnecessary and, at this point in time, unrequired. I say this, Speaker, because as of about four hours ago, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the strikes engaged upon by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation in Rainbow District, Durham District and Peel District School Boards were unlawful. Those aren't my words. That's the Ontario Labour Relations Board's words: "unlawful strikes."

When they ordered the teachers' union back to the classes for tomorrow, and since the union and the boards have said that there will be classes tomorrow in those three school districts, it begs the question—two questions, actually: Why does the New Democratic Party continue to stand here this evening, right until the midnight hour, to defend an unlawful, illegal strike that affected children right across this province, kept them out of their schools, and almost jeopardized their education and their school year? That is a serious question I have for the New Democrats.

Finally, I would ask the government House leader, who I have great respect for and a good friendship with: You are very much aware that this piece of legislation is now irrelevant. Would you please consider removing it from the floor of the assembly so that we can continue to debate issues that are relevant, the issues that we must deal with, including the sale of Hydro One, including the Ontario pension plan, including other issues that are



important to the people of Nepean–Carleton and the broader public?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** First of all, to the beginning comments that the member made about being a young man of 15 years old emigrating to Canada and the experience that that brought and where he's at today: I think that speaks volumes to what this nation is all about. It's a nation of immigrants, of people who come here, make this their home and contribute. I think the only mistake you made along the way was, you became a Liberal. I do notice you have on an orange tie. You could have been a New Democrat like your brother, and you probably would have done just as well.

I just also want to speak to the point—the government has this bill before the House, why? Because it hasn't decided if they need to withdraw this bill or go forward with this bill. They haven't had a chance to, quite frankly, have their lawyers be able to go through this thing in order to make that decision. That's why we're in this debate. I always enjoy Conservatives because they always have a very simplistic view of things when it comes to how they deal with legislation.

The reality is that if the government thought that they didn't need this bill, and if they thought the OLRB decision dealt with this effectively, they would have withdrawn this bill or they would have indicated to the opposition House leaders—myself and Mr. Clark—that, in fact, this bill was not needed. So at this point why we're doing this is because the government is still reviewing at this hour what it is that they're going to do tomorrow morning, and we wait to see what that's going to be.

Again, I just want to say to the honourable member across the way: I always appreciate your comments.

I also want to speak directly to why we're in this mess in the first place. The Minister of Education, quite frankly, dropped the ball. She was responsible to negotiate an agreement, and what she did is she tried to blame everybody else for her failure to go to the bargaining table and to negotiate a settlement. That's how you deal with bargaining in order to not be in this position where we're debating this in the House today. If anybody should take responsibility for having this debate today, it should be the Minister of Education, who failed in her job to properly do what needs to be done, to negotiate a collective agreement, so that we wouldn't be in this spot in the first place.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments? The member for Elgin–Middlesex–London.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Thank you.

**Interjection:** Joe was up.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Forgive me. I did not see him because he's on this side. The member for Ajax–Pickering.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order.

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** Fellow members, yesterday the government received a student jeopardy advisement, and that's why we have brought forward Bill 103. Why did we bring it forward? We brought it forward because of the students.

The Ontario Labour Relations Board has declared local strikes in Durham, Peel and Rainbow, which is Sudbury, to be unlawful. Durham being my home area—my colleague the MPP from Durham is here as well and understands the same process. He's a former school trustee, and he understands what we're going through.

Also, it's very important for the students that they know that our proposed legislation will allow students the opportunity to successfully complete their school year without further disruption. That is so important. Some of us here are past school trustees, and they are very sensitive at these times. I, as a Catholic school trustee, am very, very sensitive at this point in time, and sensitive about our children.

What about our teachers? And what about our students? And what about our children? I can capsule that in one general statement: I was blessed with a mother who graduated from normal school, was a teacher, and she went on to do something significantly more important, and that was to mother 10 wonderful children, of which I had the pleasure to be the oldest. I can tell you that my mother was special. She was special as a mother, she was special as a teacher, and teachers themselves are special. Let's never, ever forget that.

When we talk about things, we always want to remember the very special times, and those special times are with great education, with special teachers—very special teachers—special children, all of our children. But so important: Let's send them back to school today, ladies and gentlemen. Why? It's because of our students.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** I'm glad to share my two cents on this debate; however, I find it very difficult to—I keep hearing from the Liberal side, the government side, that “it's for the kids. It's for the kids.” I don't have the experience of a school board trustee—everybody keeps showing that out there—but what I do have is that I am a parent. My daughter is in grade 5. I'm the silent majority out there that's saying that our teachers need to be teaching our kids.

Unfortunately, we're spending three hours now, tonight, in our last two weeks at the Legislature, debating a bill that's not needed anymore. These school boards are back to work tomorrow. The teachers are teaching and the kids are learning as of tomorrow, but we want to continue to debate this bill.

2120

We should be debating a bill, maybe, on how to fix our hydro rates, on how to deal with the debt and deficit or on how to deal with employment. Because at the end of the day, 10, 15 or 20 years down the road, that's going to affect our children that we're debating about, even though we have this bill on the floor that is not going to

accomplish anything because they're going back to work tomorrow. Why not deal with something in the future that our kids can actually deal with going forward?

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I ask the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke to withdraw.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdraw.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Continue.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

However, I will deal with one issue in our school board system, and that's the fact that our one French immersion school in all of Elgin county is going to crack 800 students next year—it's a school built for 400 students—but it's going to take maybe three to four years to actually deal with the issue because of the bureaucracy this government has created.

So unfortunately, French, which is definitely needed in southwestern Ontario, is not going to be dealt with because we're too busy debating whether or not teachers should go back to work even though they're going back to work tomorrow. The francophone affairs minister is here. Minister, mes élèves français ont besoin d'une nouvelle école maintenant. Please work on that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Government House leader, you have two minutes.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Let me thank the members from Nepean–Carleton, Timmins–James Bay, Ajax–Pickering and Elgin–Middlesex–London for their comments and feedback on this topic.

Interestingly, I picked out a theme in all of their comments. It was about our children. The theme was that everybody agreed that education is important and everybody agreed that we need to make sure that our children are in school and that they need to get a good education to thrive. So I thank the members for validating the point that I was making.

I knew that and I said that already at the outset of my 20 minutes, that we all, 107 of us, share a common goal, dream and vision. We're here because we believe in public services. We are here and we believe in making sure that we've got quality health care—publicly funded, universally accessible—and that we've got the best public education system in the world.

That's why we're here tonight debating this bill. We want to make sure that children in Durham, Peel and Sudbury are able to go to school tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Some of them have been out of school for the last six weeks. Their school year is being jeopardized. That's not our call; that's the Education Relations Commission's call. It is an independent, non-partisan labour relations board. Even it has ruled that their school year is in jeopardy. We owe it to our children to make sure that we allow them to be in the classroom to learn, to be able to get an education and graduate in the next few weeks. That's why I urge the members to support this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Here we are at 9:30 tonight—a wonderful evening for having a debate in regard to our school children.

J'aimerais dire un beau petit mot à mon beau vieux Matthieu, qui est à la maison et qui m'a appelé de bonne heure ce matin. Sais-tu ce qu'il m'a dit ce matin?

**Une voix:** C'est quoi qu'il t'a dit?

**M. Michael Mantha:** Il m'a appelé et puis il m'a dit : « Dad, j'ai de bonnes nouvelles. » Mon garçon vient de graduer de Canadore comme électricien certifié. Il m'appelle et il me dit : « Dad, j'ai de bonnes nouvelles. Non seulement j'ai gradué, mais je me suis trouvé un emploi. » Mon garçon, qui a passé à travers son éducation, à travers l'école, a travaillé extrêmement fort.

Je veux donner beaucoup de crédit à plusieurs écoles : premièrement, l'École Notre-Dame du Rosaire à Gogama, qui a été suivie par l'école St-Joseph à Wawa. Je sais qu'il y a plusieurs personnes qui ont formé mon garçon à l'école, surtout M. Bédard, qui était le « principal » dans le temps—et puis l'école Villa Française des Jeunes à Elliot Lake, qui a vraiment sorti Matthieu, on va dire, de sa coquille. Et puis là maintenant, il va commencer sous peu, dans les deux ou trois prochaines semaines, à se trouver dans le domaine du travail dans sons cours d'électricien.

Il est tard dans le soir, Matthieu, mais il n'est pas si tard que ça; j'espère que tu es parti au Tim Hortons prendre un café avec tes amis, et que tu es en train de parler du projet de loi qu'on discute ce soir.

*Une voix.*

**M. Michael Mantha:** Oui, il a l'âge; il est peut-être bien parti au coin de l'hôtel.

Tu es au commencement de ta vie, mon garçon. Dad est très fier de toi, et puis continue.

À mon plus jeune, mon beau bébé, Roch—tu vas tout le temps être mon bébé, Roch. Toi, continue.

Je veux aussi encore reconnaître les écoles qui l'ont aidé avec son éducation. Comme parents, ma femme et moi, on a tout le temps reconnu que Roch avait des difficultés à apprendre certaines choses, mais c'est grâce aux écoles et aux enseignants et enseignantes—les aides-enseignants—qui étaient là et qui sont venus à bout de reconnaître la difficulté qu'il avait—maintenant, ce n'est plus une difficulté; c'est maintenant un atout qu'a Roch. Il a démontré qu'il est capable d'avancer dans le domaine de l'éducation. Il est super bon; il a de super belles notes dans les mathématiques, et puis lui, il va se préparer dans le domaine de la menuiserie.

Je veux dire merci surtout à une belle demoiselle qui était à Wawa et qui a reconnu ses talents, M<sup>me</sup> Lorraine Bélanger. Merci, Lorraine, pour tout ce que tu as fait avec Roch. Maintenant, Roch est à Villa Française des Jeunes à Elliot Lake, et il continue à s'avancer dans les écoles. Il est super. Il est comme un papillon social qui se promène partout. Je pense qu'il est à Sudbury aujourd'hui en train de participer à une compétition de Radio-Canada.

Je veux dire à toi aussi, Roch : il est tard; j'espère que tu es couché et j'espère que tu es revenu de Sudbury.



Prends soin, mon gars. Dad, il te regarde. Chaque jour, les deux, vous me faites fier; I'm with your mom.

I'm proud to speak tonight to this bill on behalf of New Democrats and teachers across this province in regard to, particularly, kids from Algoma-Manitoulin. And that's something that we haven't heard in a lot of the debate that has been going on here tonight. I haven't listened to or received any information that any of you have been hearing the voices of our students. I'm going to try and touch on that in some of my comments that I'm making tonight because they are alive and they do have an opinion and they have been voicing it. I'm going to be sharing some of their comments with the Legislature tonight here.

They come from a vast area. Some of them whom I've met through my riding have put me in contact with kids across this province, so I'll be bringing some of their comments that they've been having with some of the decisions that have been going on here.

It has been crystal clear that parents and students and educators and educational workers in this province have been frustrated for a very long time. Year after year, we continue to see the Liberal government putting education on the chopping block. Liberals say that they are putting students first; then they turn around and they chop and chop and chop. It's evident that education cuts are undermining the ability of students to learn.

We continue to see cuts that are resulting in closed schools, fewer classroom supports, decreased access to special education and the strikes and work-to-rule campaigns by teachers who would much rather be in the classroom. Teachers teach; that's what they know best. And teachers want to be in classrooms.

This Liberal government says they care about education, but teachers, educational workers and educational assistants are all being fired across this province. These cuts hurt Ontario students and these cuts undermine our teachers' and educational workers' ability to do their job and provide the best possible education for our kids.

This does not look like the work of a Premier and a government that has students' and teachers' best interests at mind. This does not look like a government that is putting students first. This is a government that says one thing during election time—tells voters they are different, more progressive and that they respect education—and then turns around and does whatever they want, with no regard for people and process.

So here we are again; it's like déjà vu. This Liberal government has yet again thrown Ontario's school system into chaos, and students and parents are left paying the price. But we could have predicted this.

2130

For months, we've been hearing from parents and teachers expressing their concerns about Liberal cuts to education and what it means to their kids' education.

Students have been put out of the classroom in Durham since April 20, in Sudbury since April 27, and in Peel since May 4, and this government, who says they are about teachers, students and parents, just sat there on the sidelines wondering why.

As our leader, Andrea Horwath, stated yesterday, this is a Premier who campaigned on promises of fixing the bargaining process and repairing the damage done in our schools by Bill 115. There was a lot of damage that was done in regard to Bill 115.

We reminded this Legislature yesterday that we elected our fabulous colleague Catherine Fife as a result of the mess that the Liberals made with Bill 115 in their cynical ploy to try to gain a majority government at the expense of teachers, students and families. Here we are sitting in this Legislature with a majority government putting the blame on the opposition, wondering why they can't do what they're supposed to do, which is to negotiate. Instead, they want to legislate.

In reality, this Premier and this government have no respect for teachers, no respect for students and no respect for parents, and they certainly have no respect for collective bargaining. Just like with Bill 115, the government has shown that it prefers to legislate rather than negotiate. Don't be fooled. This is only the beginning. This government is making it clear that it will legislate anything that it fails to negotiate in good faith.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things we have been working hard to combat in our schools is bullying. In fact, just a few weeks ago, on May 4, members participated in the anti-bullying day, or Pink Shirt Day, a day to symbolize a stand against bullying in our schools. Well, it's pretty darned clear that the Wynne Liberal government is the bully in this legislative playground. We all should have worn pink today.

We teach our children to use their words, not their fists.

*Interjection.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, I've asked you to come to order several times. You walk out of the chamber and you scream; you walk in and you scream. Next time, you're going to be named.

*Continue.*

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** I actually enjoy the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs. Stick around, be quiet and listen, please.

We teach our children to work together and come to an agreement when they are in arguments with their peers—we're not in agreement; we're having a discussion here. These are the very basic, simple learning and development skills that we, as parents, as educators, as role models and leaders preach.

As a parent, I always tried to do my best with my sons. The answer should never be—and my wife, the mediator, always reminds me—"Because I said so." You should not tell your children: "Because I'm the boss. Because I'm in charge."

What we want to do is use our words. We should negotiate and not legislate.

These are terrible negotiating skills and not what we want to teach our youngsters. Yet again, this government that claims to care so much about students, teachers and the education system and creating a bully-free environ-

ment is in fact the biggest bully of all. You are sending an abysmal message to students, teachers, parents and everyone else that our opinions do not matter; you will do whatever you want. The Liberal government's behaviour is nothing short of shameful and irresponsible.

As I was stating a little bit earlier, I want to introduce you to a group of very dedicated and active students who are in our schools. I'm not sure if any of you have bothered to look at their website. They're called Ontario Students Right to be Heard. From Sudbury Secondary School, there is Anna-Lisa Shandro and Benjamin MacKenzie; from Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School, there's Spencer Pylatuk and Greg Lee; from Confederation Secondary School, there's Vincent Leduc; and someone I just recently met—we've been speaking over Facebook and we've actually been looking forward to meeting up with each other—the representative out of Espanola High School, Daneen Maher. Their petition reads:

"Ontario teachers in three different regions have been striking, as many of you know. Now there is talk of back-to-work legislation. This legislation takes away our teachers' right to strike, and why, might you ask? 'For the students.' As a student myself, after being out for five to six weeks, I'd like if it did something. Don't make teachers go back without negotiation; make the school board negotiate." Make our government negotiate.

"People don't strike for no reason. Back-to-work legislation is a quick fix that will only lead to this happening again.

"Stand up for our teachers' rights."

I've asked Daneen Maher for her permission to read out her letter that she sent to the Premier, and I'll read it out:

"I, Daneen Maher, student of Espanola High School, Rainbow District School Board, have a problem with what is currently an issue for all parents, teachers, and students like me.

"This year, 2015, will be my last year of high school. I am now entering a new world of reality and have been accepted to Cambrian College for police foundations. My dream career of becoming a police officer is now in jeopardy because of this strike. Sending students back to school now is unbelievably ridiculous. I, as a student, cannot learn at fast paces. I have studied at home to prepare me for this decision that has officially come up. I have a part-time job, now a full-time job, that I have been working to save up money for college and my future goals. The government has officially ruined my education and opportunity to learn more, pick up my grades, and succeed in high school, and you expect me to go back to school for three weeks, finish exams, and graduate?

"Excuse me for the deliberate response but the government needs to understand [that] students like me will not be able to pass their exams or learn as fast as you expect us to. I cannot go back to school as if nothing happened and learn as if I did not miss any days of my education. Clearly the government does not care about students, nor do they care about the teachers who went on

strike and had their legal right to do so. In my opinion, teachers should continue their legal action and be heard; students should graduate with their mid-term marks, as expected. I do not believe this was a wise decision. Thank you for ruining my education and learning abilities.

"Thank you for letting me have the opportunity to give you my opinion.

"Daneen Maher,

"Rainbow District School Board."

There are more students that are voicing their opinion. Here's Shawn from Sudbury: "I'm signing this" petition "because I want to continue to live in a democracy and not have the rights of my fellow citizens slowly chipped away. These teachers aren't fighting for better pay or better benefits; they are fighting for things that students will benefit from. I'm signing this because, if and when I have children in this school district, I don't want to be sending them to an even more flawed school system than what we already have.

"Negotiate fairly and listen to those who are on the front lines and in the schools. You politicians are so very disconnected from the issues. Trust those that teach our youth."

Here's Hanna from Tehkummah: "I am signing because I am a student, because teachers' voices aren't being heard and, more importantly, students are not being heard. The teachers deserve a contract and fair negotiations with their boards. I am signing because this strike is affecting all of us, especially student education and teachers' basic rights. The teachers are striking to better our education so the school boards don't strip away basic classroom needs like spares and class cap sizes.

"Students are being completely disregarded, and frankly it's pissing me—and many other students—off.

"Smarten up."

Simran from Brampton: "I'm signing because I believe everyone should have their rights. The right to strike is the teachers' right to stand up for themselves. They literally shape the future, and we should start treating them fairly."

Ahmed from Mississauga: "I am signing this petition because the 'going-back legislation' is a way of the government avoiding negotiations."

And we think our children don't know what's going on?

Melanie from Toronto: "I'm signing because our teachers aren't striking for themselves. The issues they're striking for go way beyond. Maybe the board should take into consideration the issues with the new changes in contracts. It is unfair for a child to be forced to learn with an unlimited number of other students in the classroom. Being at my high school, I stayed for five years because simply having 30 kids was already too much. Please also consider the teachers that will have to teach all those kids. In the long run, the education system is sinking and no one wants to do anything about it."

2140

Tara in Espanola: "We should not live in a country where the government can pass legislation forcing teach-



ers back to work without the government negotiating fairly. Shame on the bullying done by our government!”

Last but not least, Charlene from Brampton: “Standing up” to fight “for education in Ontario!”

Those are kids who are telling us this. This is the message that they’re telling us.

This Minister of Education and Premier claim that these are local issues, but with the breakdown of central talks in OSSTF and ETFO, the government must take responsibility for throwing our schools into chaos. They have created this mess. No one else is to blame. You had a duty to sit down and meet with the teachers, meet with the unions and come up with an agreement. That was your job. That’s what your mandate is. That’s what you’re supposed to do as a government. You have a majority government. You can sit down and get this done.

But no, you’d rather play the blame game, throw the ball to the other side and say, “We can’t take the responsibility. We can’t do the job that we’re supposed to do, so we’re going to pass the buck on to you and now it’s your fault and we’re going to blame you, because that’s politically correct for us to do.”

We can’t stop the Liberal government from passing this legislation. The Liberals have a majority; they’re going to push this through regardless. They will do what a majority government has the ability to do, regardless of the spin that they’re going to put through this. You can basically count on it; they’re going to get it done. But we also know that the Liberals have not learned a single thing since implementing Bill 115. Again they have failed parents. Again they have failed students. And again they have failed teachers.

I still have many emails from parents and students who voiced their discontent in regard to what happened with Bill 115, and a lot of that discontent is still relevant today. I’ll read from Arlene, a teacher who is up in Elliot Lake. It:

“—gives unprecedented decision-making powers to the Minister of Education without public review,

“—is undemocratic and violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,

“—restricts the collective bargaining rights ...

“—has created unnecessary labour unrest ...

“—takes away legal powers from democratically elected trustees of school boards,

“—and removes the rights of” bargaining unit members.

I have another one from Mark in Manitowaning:

“As a retired school teacher I am very disappointed with the” Liberal government “and also the Conservatives on their pushing through Bill 115. It is very wrong and undemocratic to take away collective ... rights and eliminate all that stands for in democracy and the former collective agreements.”

From Ray in Manitowaning:

“I would like to express my displeasure through you.... I am more upset by my loss of rights ... than I am by the imposed contract conditions. At this time, I am required by law” to teach.

“If I wanted to live in a country where union rights are unilaterally taken away, I could always have moved to a country run by a dictator.

“I am very upset, and I thank you for advocating for the rights” of our teachers.

The list goes on and on and on in regard to where they’re coming from and how their arguments are being put forward. Again, we learn that this continues on. Nothing has changed and this government still has not learned from their errors that they’ve made over and over and over in the past.

Children and students know what is going on. The decisions that you’re making today will have a huge impact on their future. You as individuals, as MPPs here—we have the same responsibilities as teachers do in our riding. We are moulding the future views of the kids who are going to our schools, who are in our education system. Take the time to reflect on the decisions that you’re going to be effecting and how it’s going to be affecting their lives.

My time is up, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**L’hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Il est 10 heures moins quart le soir. Alors, je veux que les gens d’Ottawa-Vanier sachent qu’on est ici et qu’on est en train de parler du projet de loi 103 parce que nous voulons que les jeunes retournent à l’école. Je suis chanceuse parce qu’à Ottawa-Vanier—à Ottawa—il n’y a pas de professeurs qui sont en grève. Alors, les étudiants peuvent continuer leurs cours.

J’aurais aimé pouvoir parler longtemps ce soir parce que j’aurais voulu vous parler—moi, je viens d’une famille d’enseignants. Ma mère était enseignante. Ma belle-mère était enseignante. Mon beau-frère est enseignant. Ma nièce est enseignante. Notre fils est enseignant et sa future femme est enseignante aussi. Alors, pour nous, l’enseignement est très important et on connaît les deux côtés, soit d’être étudiant ou enseignant.

Dans ma circonscription, j’ai des écoles extraordinaires, des professeurs hors pair et des directions d’école extraordinaires aussi. Je ne suis pas ici pour critiquer l’un et l’autre. Bon, on sait qu’il y avait une grève illégale, alors les professeurs vont retourner travailler dans trois des conseils scolaires.

Dans ma circonscription, il y a des écoles extraordinaires. Par exemple, il y a deux écoles de ma circonscription qui ont été classées dans les premières selon un « think tank » qui a fait l’évaluation des écoles dernièrement. L’école Minto est arrivée en première place, et en troisième place est l’école secondaire Colonel By.

Le député d’Elgin—Middlesex—London veut avoir une école française. Savez-vous, monsieur le Président, que depuis 2003 on a construit 100 nouvelles écoles francophones en Ontario? Alors, peut-être vous êtes sur la liste pour la prochaine. Bonne soirée.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further comments and questions?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is my pleasure to once again join debate today on this piece of legislation. I do have an

important update for the New Democrats. About five hours ago, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the strike with the Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers' Federation in Rainbow, Peel and in Durham, in their school boards, was, it's important to know, unlawful. Those are not my words; it was the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** What did they say?

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** They said it was unlawful; it was an illegal strike. So we are now sitting here, five hours after the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that this was an illegal strike, and the NDP continue to stand up and defend an illegal strike. In fact, in the words of my dear friend from Algoma-Manitoulin—he said this: “It is the duty of the government to meet the union and get an agreement.” You cannot get an agreement when people are on an illegal strike that has put a school year in jeopardy for students in three school board districts right across this province. That is shameful, Speaker.

Here we are tonight, debating a piece of legislation that becomes irrelevant as of tomorrow morning when those kids get back into their classrooms and those students start to learn again, because those teachers will be back in their classrooms—which, by the way, is the end and ultimate goal.

I would remind the third party—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** —and I remind the former chair of the Kitchener and Waterloo school board that she would have, as the chair of that board, opposed an unlawful, illegal strike in her school board. So I will stand here as a Progressive Conservative and I will suggest respectfully to the NDP: Get on with it; let's move on to something that's relevant. Stop supporting illegal strike action.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I thank the member but I would remind—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order. Order, please. I thank the member from Nepean-Carleton, but I would remind all members in the Legislature that when you are in fact given the floor, you address the chair and not turn to other members in an attempt perhaps to antagonize. I'm just saying.

Further questions and comments?

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order, please.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I'm talking about over here. But I will say to the member: If the shoe fits, wear it.

Further questions and comments?

2150

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I want to thank the member from Algoma-Manitoulin for actually bringing the voices of students to the Legislature. It's interesting because the students get it. They get why those teachers walked out.

They get why they were at the table and that they were fighting for those resources. They get it—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Order.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** So the students get it, but the government doesn't get it. The natural default position of the Liberal government of Ontario currently is that they would rather legislate versus negotiate—if they really truly cared about students.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I might add that back-to-work legislation is a very, very public admission that the Minister of Education and the Premier have failed to bring the people together, resolve the issues and end the chaos in our schools. You have been very successful at creating a crisis in education. It isn't anything to be proud of. Bringing forward back-to-work legislation to this Legislature is nothing to be proud of, and I want to remind you of why we are here in the first place. It all goes back to Bill 115, when you squashed the collective bargaining rights back in 2012. It's an issue very close to me.

Then you brought in Bill 122 to try to fix the problem, but it was never designed to work. That was never designed to work because the government holds the purse strings. The last delegation that came to the budget committee—she was from Parry Sound-Muskoka. She talked about having 32 kids in her full-day kindergarten class. She talked about the special education kids that have to be sent home because they do not have the resources in their schools. Those are the issues at the table.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I know you don't want to hear it. I know you don't want to hear it, but that's too bad because it is our job—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Oh, you don't care? You don't care about hearing those voices? That says it all.

Back-to-work legislation solves nothing. It never has. It never will.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** A number of my colleagues on all sides have said, “Why are we here debating this?” and a few on the opposition side have asked, “Is this bill indeed relevant?” So let me explain by quoting from the decision from Justice Fishbein why it is that we're here.

In part, his decision reads as follows: The decision “orders that Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation ... its officers, officials and agents and striking employees at the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board cease and desist their unlawful strike”—here's the key part—“from the date of this decision, and not resume it until the two (2) week moratorium described in this decision has expired.”

Do we need to go back and do this again in two weeks? We are here today debating Bill 103 so we do not need to come back here in two weeks and solve this problem all over again. We need to get this bill passed.



We need to ensure that, two weeks from now, these same three bargaining units cannot go back on strike. This is about getting the students back into school tomorrow morning at the Durham board, at the Rainbow board and at the Peel board, to get them to finish their school year without running the risk of having that school interrupted by the resumption of this particular labour stoppage in two weeks.

That's why we need this bill passed. That's why Bill 103 is important and that's why I'm hoping that our colleagues from the NDP will simply stop this action. Let's get this bill back on the floor of the Legislature after question period tomorrow. Let's get on with it, let's get the bill passed and let's get these contracts negotiated.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Final comments?

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** C'est tout le temps un plaisir d'être dans la Chambre avec les commentateurs de la ministre—the Attorney General and minister responsible for francophone affairs.

To the member from Nepean–Carleton, the only thing that I can say, my dear, is: Negotiate; don't legislate. That's something the Liberals and the Conservatives have been teaming up quite well on over the last few years and demonstrated that they can do. We all know who sets the order paper. You have your majority government—they have the mandate, they have the votes, they have the capacity of pushing this forward, and they can do it. They can stop playing the blame game.

I just want to say I'm glad that the Premier was here because Daneen Maher, who wrote you a letter, will be very impressed that I had the opportunity to read it out to you.

To the member from Kitchener–Waterloo: Students do get it. You're absolutely right; they do get it, and they also have ideas. And you know what? They also have voices and are also getting to an age where they will be able to exercise their right to vote. If this government continues to do the attacks that they're doing on our education system, you will live to learn and to regret the decisions that you're making today, and also the ones that you are not making today. I encourage you to listen to those young voices because they are the future of this province.

To the member from Mississauga–Streetsville: The only thing I can say is that there is a reason why there is a possibility that we might be here in two weeks from now and there's a reason why we are here right now. That's because the government has refused to negotiate, and you have implemented—to legislate.

You've got to change your course of action. There has to be a way. You've got to reach out to the teachers and listen to what they're asking for. Look at the impacts that your decisions are having on our children and into our schools, that are going to be implemented—because these kids, these children, are the ones who are going to be making your decisions tomorrow. We need to make sure that they are shaped and that they are prepared,

because whether you like it or not, they are making decisions. If you are not listening to them, they will go in their own direction, and it won't be following you.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate? Further debate? Further debate?

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** I'm getting to you, okay? I mean, I'm going to recognize you. I recognize the member from Oshawa.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As always, it is my honour to rise in this Legislature to address the concerns of my constituents and all Ontarians. Actually I was going to say, "But today"—it's not today; it's my first time in a midnight sitting, so I thank the government for that opportunity.

It is my privilege to rise on behalf of kids, parents and educators in my community and beyond. This government is failing our students. Instead of investing in education, supporting our classrooms and partnering with our schools, the Liberals want to gut the system, increase class sizes and cause chaos in our communities. These are the priorities the government has set for our education system. Instead of working together to enhance our schools, the government has set its focus on dismantling them all by themselves.

The Minister of Education was given a job, but she didn't get the job done. Instead of bringing people together, the minister blamed teachers, blamed boards of education and drove the two sides apart. That's not just failing to get the job done; that's blatantly making things worse.

If the minister was capable of running our education system, then we would see negotiation without legislation, but instead we've got Bill 115, the sequel, here on the Legislature floor. If she can't get the job done, it's time for the Premier to fire her minister and appoint someone who can. If the Premier can't see that, then it's clear she isn't serious about putting kids and parents first.

We expect more from this government. Our students expect more from this government. Parents expect more from this government, and teachers expect more from this government. I expect more from this government.

Tabling back-to-work legislation is a public admission of failure. This bill is living proof that the Minister of Education and the Premier have failed to bring people together and resolve the chaos in our schools, the chaos that they have created.

Our classrooms are squeezed. Our schools are squeezed. It wasn't that long ago that I was in the classroom and saw first-hand just how squeezed. This Premier is squeezing more by the day. The Liberal government cut \$250 million from education in 2014-15. I guess the minister and the Premier must think that our kids are doing too well. This government is firing teachers and closing schools. They're cutting classroom supports, decreasing special education and undermining the ability of our students to learn.

The Premier claims she cut her teeth on education, but now she's just cutting education, period. This is yet an-

other example of this Liberal government painting themselves one way before revealing their true colours: the progressive Premier, privatizing Hydro One, introducing austerity budgets, limiting oversight and transparency and topping it all off with chaos in our classrooms. Our students deserve better. Our parents deserve better. Our teachers deserve better, and Ontarians deserve better.

I would like to know if the government thought that nobody would notice when they cut \$250 million in education funding this year. I wonder if they thought that parents wouldn't mind as they dismantled programming and increased class sizes. We know that the Premier has managed to get herself out of some pretty sticky situations, but things start to catch up with you eventually and some of this is going to stick. That's what we're seeing happen: the government tripping over its own mess—a mess it created; a mess this Minister of Education created.

2200

Last month, the minister said she was perplexed by what is taking place. Perhaps that's because she hasn't been paying too much attention. It seems she just hasn't been paying much attention to anything going on in education. If her job is to deliver an effective education system and she can't even reach a deal with teachers, I don't see what use she is to us in that role. The Minister of Education has failed to get a deal with teachers that will put kids first, and she should resign for that reason. If she's not willing to do that, we leave it to the Premier to take the appropriate action.

In the meantime, the government is desperately trying to point fingers as they desperately try to clean up their mess. But these are Band-Aid solutions. As long as the government continues to gut our education system, then there is going to be chaos in our education system.

The entire point of education is investing in the future, yet this government can barely see the end of its nose. Maybe it's because it's growing or maybe that's just an acknowledgement of their short-sightedness. They're both accurate, and they're both a part of the problem.

This government systematically underfunds and under-resources our kids and their futures. You know far too well that in order to address even a fraction of the initiatives and priorities that our kids deserve in their learning environments, there is so much more funding required. You know the gaps. In fact, you know the areas of challenge.

We are grossly underfunding our public education system in every way, but you know that—you know that—and you count on teachers and families—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Oh, I'm going. I'm just excited that she's listening.

You count on teachers and families to offset that underfunding; you put it on the teachers and communities. In schools—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Excuse me. Order, please. I would just like to remind members

that although I recognize and appreciate a little bantering on both sides, if you're going to do that, you should be—no, I will rephrase that—you must be in your own seat. I shall encourage those who may not be in their seat, if they're going to continue, that they shall go to their seat. I'm just saying.

Back to the member, please, for further debate. I recognize, again, the member from Oshawa.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to say it again to make the point: We are grossly underfunding our public education system in every way, but you know that, and you count on teachers and families to offset that underfunding.

In schools in areas that are well-off financially, you depend on fundraising and community resources to fill in the gaps and pay for supplies and opportunities in the classrooms and in school.

I have taught in schools that are significantly under-resourced in the heart of communities with low financial security and predictability. In lower-income communities, schools can't fundraise for big-ticket items; we fundraise to replace the things that break. We fundraise to replace sports equipment that we wear out, and maybe, if it's close and inexpensive, we can afford a bus for one field trip per year per grade.

In lower-income areas, we depend on donations from businesses like backpacks with school supplies. We depend on charitable donations when it comes to break-fast programs. You know that there is not a teacher in this province who will let their kids go without. You count on that to fill in that funding gap.

When I cleaned out my desk when my school closed when I was teaching at R.A. Sennett Public School in Whitby, there was a bag of new socks and granola bars, because that was the reality in that community. I used to have to buy second-hand shoes in every typical grade 5 size to keep my students in shoes, because parents couldn't afford to replace the shoes as they grew out of them.

Teachers should keep track of what they spend in a month on art supplies, pencils, food, clothing, paper, teaching resources, sports equipment and everything else that students need to fully learn and participate in their learning. They should keep those receipts and then submit them to the Minister of Education so you could at the very least not claim to be perplexed or ignorant about this.

Speaker, just a reminder: The government created this mess. It seems to be what they do with their desperate austerity agenda. Attacks on teachers, our classrooms, our students and our communities are unconscionable. This is not an accidental or perplexing situation that we find ourselves in. This is what happens when this Liberal government funds scandals and boondoggles and doesn't prioritize our schools or fairly fund our future.

Cuts are real, despite the fact that this government pretends they aren't happening. When they talk about keeping funding the same in one column, it's just a shell game of shifting from column A to column B. There is



less money, and as a result our classrooms and schools are squeezed.

I will tell you how challenging it is to teach in a classroom with a third or a fourth of the class on individualized education plans, needing specialized support with no educational assistant support, because cuts are so severe that our EAs are primarily allocated for safety concerns, toileting and behaviour. Unfortunately, resources don't actually extend far enough for our educational assistants to be able to educationally assist anymore.

#### *Interjections.*

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** The fact that they find this laughable I find really disconcerting, because this Liberal government cuts away and closes, and our communities are left the worse for it. The more that schools are starved and stripped, the more they will have to close. We are currently losing one of our high schools in Oshawa; we are in the ARC process now. The government cuts and chokes, and our boards are forced to make impossible decisions.

This is not a positive, forward-moving system. But you know what? It could be. This government wants our system to be constantly in chaos. Are they hoping, perhaps, to break it down into chunks that they can sell off like hydro? Who knows? You can point across the aisle all you want. You can point at school boards; you can point at teachers. Maybe you'll point at communities and families next. But here's the real point: You did this—you did this knowingly; you did this purposefully—and you aren't even a little bit sorry.

As much as this government tries to ignore it, there are consequences to their actions and damage created by these cuts. We've all heard the stories in our constituencies—my colleague the member from Nickel Belt proved how extensive the list of those stories is earlier today. This afternoon, the member from Nickel Belt introduced a petition. This is not a petition she started; it was not a petition the NDP started. It was a petition started by students who have had enough of funding cuts and disappearing supports; students who want their government to invest in their education, not throw their hands up and walk away and point the blame; students who expect better. The petition is primarily online, based through change.org. This is a site that the government might recognize, as it is full of petitions against hydro privatization, cuts to education, scandals etc. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker: Those petitions are full of signatures.

When my colleague introduced the petition no more than a few hours ago, it had roughly 2,600 signatures online. The last I checked before I came in this evening, that number was above 3,600 and still climbing. It's not just signatures; it's full of stories from students who are fed up. I'd like to share a few of them with you now.

I will start with the student from the Rainbow District School Board who wrote, "I am signing because I am a student. Because teachers' voices aren't being heard, and more importantly, students are not heard."

This is a sentiment we are hearing time and time again about this government: Ontarians' voices aren't being

heard. Tonight we will make sure their voices are heard, or at least that they are said in the general direction of the government, and it's up to them whether or not they would like to listen.

Another student from Sudbury stated, "These teachers aren't fighting for better pay or better benefits; they are fighting for things that the students will benefit from."

2210

Another wrote, "This is only a temporary fix, and the teachers deserve better."

One signee from Gravenhurst wrote, "Come to the table and compromise. Forcing teachers back to work solves NOTHING. They are standing up for the rights of our children—listen to them!" Well said.

One of my favourite comments regarding the government's push to increase class sizes: "60 students in a class is a lot of sass." As a former intermediate school teacher, I can relate to that one; 60 students in a class would be an awful lot of sass.

One parent wrote, "I do not want to see bigger classrooms. I'm interested in my son's education/learning. I'm fighting for his future."

Another says, "Fifty kids per class is unrealistic."

It seems that students are starting to catch on that you can never trust how far this government is going to take something. When they say that they'll only sell off 40%, you might lose 90%; just like if they say class sizes will only increase by a few, you might find 50 students in double-decker desks.

One student from Pickering wrote, "I'm signing because the things that were fought for during the strike still have not been resolved and they need to be in order for students to have a better education."

Speaker, I've been out of the classroom for about a year now, but it is still refreshing to hear how smart and complex our students are. They're too young to vote, and already they're not buying what the government is selling.

Finally, from my own riding of Oshawa, one student wrote, "Teachers deserve the right to strike for whatever reason they have. It all benefits the students in the long run. What the government has done is cruel to the teachers and the students."

Speaker, I hope the government has taken some of that in—any of that in. I hope they will take a look at the petition, go ahead and scroll through the comments and realize what their actions mean for our education system.

This government is failing our students, and our students know it. Instead of investing in education, supporting our classrooms and partnering with our schools, the Liberals are gutting the system, increasing class sizes and causing chaos in our communities. Instead of working together to enhance our schools, the government has set its focus on dismantling them all by themselves, as I said. Instead of bringing people together, the Minister of Education blames teachers, blames boards of education and drives the two sides apart. If the Premier can't see that, she isn't serious about putting kids and families in our communities first.

As a result of today's OLRB decision, kids are going back to school. If the Liberal government continues to go ahead with this back-to-work legislation, it is a pre-emptive strike on teachers. It's another reckless move and a groundless attack. It's another example of the government spending more time and energy on creating new problems than it would ever be willing to spend on finding solutions. It's the easy way out that puts us on a path to more hard times. But the government isn't going to listen. It hasn't thus far. They're too busy trying to cover their tracks to check to see if they're even headed in the right direction. I can tell you right now: They're not.

Speaker, as I noted earlier, we expect more from this government. Our students expect more from this government. Parents expect more from this government. Teachers expect more from this government. The government created this mess and now we all have to live in it, since they've shown that they have no intention of cleaning it up themselves. Instead, it looks like they are going to continue to make matters worse.

It will be interesting, come September, to see the state that we're in. The Liberal government cut \$250 million from education in 2014-15. I guess the minister and Premier must think our kids are just doing too well; they have too much. But do you know what? We know the truth. Our classrooms are squeezed. Our schools are squeezed. As I said, it wasn't that long ago that I was in the classroom and I saw first-hand just how squeezed they are. I see that this Premier is squeezing and squeezing, and she's not stopping. This government is firing teachers, closing schools, cutting classroom supports, decreasing special education and undermining the ability of our students to learn.

I would like to finish by thanking the other speakers for their comments, the member for Nickel Belt for sharing such a powerful petition earlier today, and my colleague from Windsor West, the NDP education critic, for leading the way this afternoon.

Speaker, our students deserve better. Our parents deserve better. Our teachers deserve better. Ontarians deserve better. We ask that this government give them the respect and the support that they deserve.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Comments and questions?

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** I appreciate very much this opportunity to respond to the member from Oshawa's comments. It was delightful to hear a previous intermediate school teacher address the House on this issue. I found her gentle admonishing tone quite reminiscent of my time in grade 7 with one of my favourite teachers, Ms. Freeman. It brought back very warm memories of my educational experience there.

But I've got to tell you, if she's going to be admonishing this House with that tone, she really needs to better learn her subject matter. For her, in the middle of her remarks, to have the Premier of Ontario walking by and get stopped dead in her tracks—not even in her seat—to have to remind the member that the budget in education

this year has actually gone up by \$8 million, that there's more—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Arthur Potts:**—\$8 billion, and that there's more funding per pupil. You really need to get those facts straight. This is important.

We're looking at a bill here which is dealing with the negotiation circumstance that we're in right now. You would have done very well to have taken the course that I taught in Seneca College on first-year labour relations. You would understand the bargaining process far more clearly.

I am a trained fact-finder under the Education Relations Commission of Ontario, having done my master's degree at Queen's University. I want you to know that I fully respect the right to strike. It's a cornerstone of our democracy.

But when it comes to teachers' bargaining, the Education Relations Commission plays a very key role in balancing the right to strike with the right to learn. That is what this legislation is about: protecting that piece of the puzzle, the right to learn. Their right to strike is somewhat of a hybrid. Once the Education Relations Commission has found that the school year is in jeopardy, it's incumbent on us to get the kids back to school so they can have their year, so they can move on to the next level in their education.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It is a pleasure to rise to debate this bill with respect to the illegal strike activity that did occur over the last couple of weeks. I want to say thank you to the member from Oshawa for her speech. I thought actually it was very well done.

That said, it was not timely, so I'm not sure if she was aware, but about five and a half, almost six hours ago, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that the strike by the Durham, Peel and Rainbow District School Boards was illegal. In fact, the Ontario Labour Relations Board said it was "unlawful."

With respect, I notice that the member opposite from the NDP was talking in a similar vein to what the other members of this assembly from the third party were talking about in terms of the union being misled by the government or was negotiating in bad faith. The problem is, you're either following the law, or you're breaking the law. In this case, the Ontario Labour Relations Board found that the union broke the law, and the people who were most affected by this unlawful work were students who were trying to graduate from school this year.

That concerns me as a mother. My daughter is in grade 4. I know that there's going to be work-to-rule, and there is work-to-rule action with the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. She's impacted. Her teachers are doing everything in order to keep their school year as effective as possible. That said, in three school boards across the province, that wasn't the case.

The Ontario Labour Relations Board, just about six hours ago, was very clear that it was illegal. I don't know



why the third party continues to defend illegal strike action.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** It is a pleasure to listen to the member from Oshawa because she actually has the lived experience of what it means to be in that classroom and face the reality of what is the reality in education right now. It is astounding to me that the members on the opposite side can say, "No, that's not real," when she actually lived it, and more importantly, the students and families have lived it as well.

2220

Do you know what? Perhaps if this government is so enamoured with back-to-work legislation, maybe they should have brought in some legislation to get the Minister of Education back to work and not sitting on the sidelines for the last six weeks. How about that? She just sat by the sidelines for six weeks. Newsflash: Ministers of Education have a responsibility to ensure that when negotiations happen, there's actually something to negotiate. Teachers in this province have actually been talking about the learning conditions in our classrooms. That is what they've been talking about. But that is not what the Liberals have been talking about.

It is astounding to listen to the member from Beaches-East York try to school us on the education funding in this budget. You saved \$246 million when there are students in special education classrooms across this province being sent home, excluded from public education because they do not have the resources at school board level, in the school level, to actually ensure that those children can be included. That was the last delegation for us at the budget committee. That was the last message that we heard, and you should take it to heart.

Mr. Speaker, honestly, where we are right now is, yes, the OLRB has made their decision, but where is the Liberal government on back-to-work legislation? You could pull this legislation, but no. This is now your default position. From Bill 115 to Bill 122 to back-to-work legislation: That speaks volumes about the respect that this government has for public education.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments.

**Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti:** I listened to the speech, the comments made by the member from Oshawa. She spoke very well, and she gave a good perspective on what it is to be a teacher. I think teachers have a unique perspective. We have teachers on our side as well. When I talk to them, their concern is the students. I think all of us here are concerned that the students are able to get their education.

We've gotten advice from the Education Relations Commission, and they said that if we don't introduce legislation, there would be three different areas, Durham, Sudbury and Peel, where the students couldn't complete the year. We just want to get them back in the classroom—focus on the students and get them back in the classroom—and finish the school year. If I put myself in

those shoes and I was in grade 12 or 11, I'd want to be in school and finish the school year. That's really what I have to say. Good speech.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Oshawa for her final comments.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you, first, to the member from Beaches-East York. I'm glad that you found my remarks delightful. I'm sure that you as a grade 7, young Mr. Potts, would have been equally delightful. I appreciate your comments about the right to strike, the right to learn, and I would remind the member that negotiating is the option rather than legislating. That should have been what happened here.

To the member from Nepean—Carleton, thank you for your comments. While you said that my remarks were not timely, I appreciate you mentioning the time, because here we are, on our way to midnight. As a new member, this is a first, as I mentioned.

She also said that if you're not following the law; you're breaking the law. But I would remind her that here we are, in the Legislature of Ontario, and this is where we debate the law as well, and where we make the law. I find it interesting, as the member from Kitchener—Waterloo brought up, that we had the opportunity—we're here because you invited us here. You invited us. You said, "Let's have sittings until midnight. Let's talk about the school year that's in jeopardy. Let's talk about back-to-work legislation." But somehow it is morphed, because you know that the school year is not in jeopardy.

The member from Scarborough Southwest did bring up the ERC recommendations, and that's great, but I also know that there are members on that side of the House and others who have seen the letters from these schools saying, "Congratulations, graduate. You're graduating." The school year may or may not have been in jeopardy, but we got our decision, as the member from Nepean—Carleton mentioned, five and a half or six hours ago; something like that. We're here anyway, because we're drawing out your theatre; we're drawing out the chaos. And I know that this is just the beginning. With OSSTF, ETFO, OECTA and all of them ready to go—what a summer we're going to have; what a September we're going to have.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Speaker, thank you for recognizing me this evening. I appreciate it.

I want to thank my colleagues from Algoma—Manitoulin, Windsor West, Oshawa and Niagara who've spoken so eloquently this evening on this quite extraordinary circumstance we find ourselves in.

It has always astounded me, in the time that I've been here, that the Liberals create chaos and then walk in and act as if they've never seen this before; this is startling to them. "My God, how did this happen? Round up the usual suspects. I'm shocked, shocked that this is going on," the Liberals say. It's extraordinary to me that time after time I can watch this party create conflict, demoralization, chaos in the education system and then act as if they're the saviours when, in fact, they were the instiga-

tors of the problem. They have created the mess that we see in our schools today. They have done nothing to fix that.

I remember being here—was it a week ago, two weeks ago?—when the Premier was saying she was going to put people's feet to the fire to get this resolved. Unfortunately, that was a match that burned out a long time ago, when it was applied to the sole of that boot and it did not have any impact. Nothing got resolved.

I talk to parents, I talk to students, I talk to teachers and education workers, and I hear from people on a regular basis about the problems they're dealing with in their schools. We went through this a few years ago with Bill 115. It wasn't back-to-work legislation; let's be clear on that. It was an act that imposed collective agreements on people, which created a huge demoralization across this province. I had to deal with the fallout in my riding: students who found the conflict and tension extraordinarily difficult to deal with; parents who came out to public meetings to meet with teachers and figure out how parents and teachers could work this through together, neither of them having caused the problem in the first place, but both of them committed to making sure we had an education system that worked.

The people who work in the schools and the people who depend on them—the parents and the students—have been thrown into this conflict not at their behest, not at their will, but because of the approach this government has taken to education, to public finance, to, really, the way this province is run.

This has not happened overnight. I'll go back again to Bill 115. I had a chance to talk to people behind the scenes on both sides going into that year, where teachers and education workers figured they weren't going to get much. They just wanted things to be stable. I understand from government negotiators who subsequently went on to other careers that they had the same approach. Yet that wasn't what the Liberals wanted out of those negotiations. They didn't actually want peace in the schools. They wanted to deal with their deficit problems—deficit problems self-imposed by an austerity approach, by a tax-cutting approach that undermines the viability of the provincial budget.

I watched as that mess unrolled. I watched as a former Minister of Education, Laurel Broten, was given a career-destroying assignment: to go and wage war with the parents, the students, the teachers and the education workers of this province. Whether you agreed with her or disagreed with her, it was pretty clear that she was being thrown into the breach. Frankly, she was sacrificed to other people's interests.

Speaker, as you may well be aware, and my colleague from Windsor West has said this numerous times: On page 230 of the most recent provincial budget—not generally riveting reading—you can see that in the last budget year, the Ministry of Education underspent by 250 million bucks.

2230

Now, Speaker, just to let you know, this government used to have a program called Healthy Smiles. They

allocated \$45 million a year to dental for low-income families. But unfortunately, who knew? What can you do about this? The rules were so tight that two thirds of the money didn't get spent on dental and would be re-allocated—reallocated. Again in this situation with education: too bad, so sad, a quarter-billion bucks not available.

A few years ago, I was walking down Boulton Avenue in my riding. I was going door to door and came across someone, a parent, a person on the street who was unloading groceries from the car. He recognized me, and we got chatting. He said, "I have a special-needs child, and I have to tell you, for all of us parents who have special-needs children, that we have a very difficult time. It is hard to get services. We know that our children need more support. Many parents are on waiting lists. Students are on waiting lists for assessment."

I say to you, Speaker, that there are pressing, legitimate needs that need to be met in our schools. And when you're not spending the money that's been allocated—that actually is needed to make the schools work—your approach is reckless, your approach is callous, your approach is one that makes life more difficult for students and parents, and undermines the morale and performance of our schools. It's our intention to work with families and with those interested in the education community to improve the quality of education, and improve the quality of schools in Ontario.

We know that the government has a majority; we can count. I went to public school here in Ontario. I am very grateful to those who were patient enough to go beyond 10 digits—to count more than 10. So I can count. You guys can get this legislation through. If you didn't think it was necessary, and maybe that's the assessment you'll make, you could withdraw it right now. Mr. Naqvi, a very capable House leader, could stand up and say, "We're satisfied. It's gone."

I'm a bit puzzled as to why you're not going forward. I've heard there is some indecision about whether you got what you wanted from the Labour Relations Board. But until it's clear, we oppose this legislation. We don't think this is the right approach. We think this will lead to demoralization. We think this is the very crude Band-Aid put on top of a very large wound imposed by the government itself on the education system—on the students and parents of this province.

Speaker, I have to tell you that there is extraordinary concern among parents and educators about the move to increase class sizes. My colleague from Oshawa spoke to that. On Saturday, I was at the Wilkinson Fun Fair in my riding, talking to a local mom who is also an elementary teacher. She has 30 kids in her class, and four of them are special ed—only four. I have to tell you that she said she couldn't quite envision how she would manage if that class were any larger. She said that a lot of the time her focus is just making sure everybody is safe, and that's it. That is a concern she has, and that other parents and educators have.

There's going to be a fight around funding for education in this province for years to come, because the need



is substantial and the motivation to reduce resources to meet that need is also substantial. One is something that we must address. The other is something we have to resist.

Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind—no question at all—that parents and students across Ontario want their schools to be properly resourced. What the government is doing with this bill is saying, “We’re not going to resource them properly, and if there are any problems down in the hold, we’ll make sure that we put on a little more pressure just to keep it under control.”

As you’re well aware, Speaker, this bill addresses labour disputes between the Durham, Rainbow and Peel district school boards and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation. Speaker, you have to know that this conflict exists within a much larger context, and I alluded to it earlier.

Earlier this year, I was talking with some teachers who work with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. They said to me that they had been talking with directors and senior staff, had come across documentation, which I’ve seen subsequently posted on the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board website: a consultation guide for school boards on how to deal with a reduction in education funding of \$500 million over the next three years.

How are you going to manage that? How are you going to manage that when, at the same time, we know, from the pressures that the member from Oshawa was talking about, that many more children are in very difficult circumstances when they come to school? How are you going to manage that when we see another round of—I guess you had the baby boom, the echo, and this is the echo of the echo: more and more new families coming into our cities.

I don’t know about the other members; they can speak for themselves. But when I go door to door in my riding, I find babies and small kids everywhere. In downtown Toronto, in East York, there used to be a community of people who were retired. I now find young families have moved in so that I have parts of my riding that I just refer to as the “baby belt,” because you can be sure, when you go around, you’re going to find strollers at the door and babies in the houses.

Those babies—and I saw some of them a few years ago, so I think they’re more than toddlers now—are going to be going into our schools. They’re going to be going into kindergarten. I want to say, I support all-day kindergarten. I support full-day kindergarten. I support its expansion. If we are going to have class sizes that are appropriate for four- and five-year-olds, if we’re going to have good facilities, we can’t cut that budget further, but that, in fact, is what is on the table. When we do that, we see conflict.

I’ve listened to the Minister of Education talk about the money that’s wasted on empty classroom space. First, I’ll say that I’ve actually watched schools over the decades in my community. I’ll take Frankland school at Logan and Danforth, which is packed. I remember in the 1970s when it was emptying out and there was a lot of

discussion about just getting rid of that school, a demolition job—and then a decade and a half later, a playground full of portables. The portables go away, the population fits into the school—and now it’s expanding again.

When we put in place schools, we size them for a potential population. That population is going to expand and contract. It’s going to expand and contract. Over time, if you don’t have that capacity, you can’t properly serve the community, and you can never afford to buy back that land to build schools. You just can’t. You can’t. So it is short-sighted at best to get rid of those school properties—short-sighted at best and, frankly, financially reckless. It’s financially reckless.

Speaker, look at some of the cuts that we’ve seen to education across Ontario. The Toronto District School Board is firing 215 teachers, 100 ESL educators, eight secretaries and five vice-presidents because of \$22 million in cuts. The simple reality: We’re told that the education budgets are being protected in a time of austerity, but in fact, they’re not. I want to tell you, Speaker, when you talk to parents and you talk to teachers and the people who work in those schools, they feel that crunch.

Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board in Peterborough is firing 118 contract teachers; 21 early childhood educators cut in Windsor-Essex. People know Windsor. Windsor is a tough town—resilient people. They’ve been going through difficult times. They need support. They need to know that the schools will be there for them. Putting in place a funding regime that means that we’re going to lose early childhood education makes no sense at all. Some 88 schools have been closed across the province since 2011. That’s a lot of schools, a lot of future headaches as those families who live in that community realize that they can’t get into their neighbourhood school. I’m dealing with that problem right now in my riding, where parents have been told that the school is so full that, yes, they live within the catchment area, but they’re out of luck. “Go somewhere else because it’s full; it’s packed.” That’s what happens.

**2240**

The 2015-16 Grants for Student Needs—that’s what they call the money that’s given out to boards of education for operation of schools—were released in March. Overall funding is \$22.46 billion. That’s virtually identical to 2014-15. I want to note, Speaker: Inflation didn’t disappear in North America recently. It continues; it is a reality. It is a reality. This is the lowest annual increase of funding for schools since the Liberals came to office. But beyond that, Speaker, note that we may well have that silent take-away under the radar—\$250 million in the last budget year. Cuts and cuts and cuts as the years go on.

The Pupil Foundation Grant, which covers the cost of salaries, textbooks and classroom supplies, will be \$36 million lower than this year. The government blames this on declining enrolment. I have to tell you, Speaker, I have a student who is doing a student placement in my office right now, a young guy called Romeo Tello. He goes to Monarch Park Collegiate. He has done a place-

ment in a city councillor's office. He has come here. He has found it an interesting and exotic place; a place with its own discreet charm, I think would be the term.

Romeo told me a few years ago about his textbooks. He asked me, "Why is it that the textbooks are older than I am? Why is it that when I open the textbook that has a picture of a high school student with a cellphone, the cellphone is bigger than a brick?" I didn't have a good answer for him. But I think you can look at the numbers and give him a very good answer. The money has not kept up with what is needed. Textbooks are not kept up to date, and as people are well aware, many teachers are photocopying textbooks. Instead of having their school boards buy textbooks, they're having to photocopy them.

This is an unsustainable way to run an education system. Some 38 school boards will receive less funding under the Special Education Grant next year, including a \$3.5-million cut for the Toronto District School Board and a \$2.7-million cut for the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The high needs allocation will be frozen for the next four years at \$1.05 billion overall. I have heard the Minister of Education say that the budget for special education isn't being cut, and maybe she's right. Maybe it's frozen. I won't argue that. What I will note is that the formula has been changed to deal with pressures in other school boards, which has essentially simply meant that money has been taken from one school board and given to another. It isn't as though the Toronto District School Board or the Toronto Catholic District School Board had a reduction in the number of special-needs kids; what they've had a reduction in is the money to actually provide those children with the service and support they need.

The Liberals come along, see that there's a mess and say, "How did this happen? How did this happen?" That's why we're here debating this evening: because they brought forward a bill that, instead of actually dealing with the long-term, profound structural problems with funding and support for schools, just tries to heap pressure on top of pressure.

Speaker, my time is short, but I do want to get as much of this out as I can. When the Conservatives set up the funding formula back in 1997, they did not put in what was needed. Dr. Rozanski, in 2002, did a study that said it was about a \$2-billion shortfall. At the time, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives said it was a pretty good estimate. In 2007, Dalton McGuinty said he'd dealt with all this. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives said no. Money had been put in to deal with promises made by the Liberals—possibly not bad promises—but the core funding shortfall was never addressed, and the CCPA reassessed that in 2014 and found the same problem still in place.

Speaker, we have a 1997 funding model. It has tape wrapped all around it, it has all kinds of clips holding it together, but it doesn't work.

This government continues to put education on the chopping block and not address the real problems.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to respond to the member from Toronto-Danforth. I'm glad he mentioned babies. As I mentioned earlier, I'm watching my Black-Berry to see when the new baby comes in our family. Babies have always been an important thing in our family.

I want to tell a very quick story. My dad, my sisters and I were driving in the car one day, and my dad said to my sister, "Do you see all these buildings? Do you know why they're building all these buildings?" My sister, who was probably about seven at the time, said, "Why?" He said, "Babies. People are having babies. That's why we're building all these buildings." That was back in the 1960s. They were having lots of babies.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Wow, you're old.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I am old.

The reality is, we did build schools and communities.

We are addressing the issue of community hubs with Karen Pitre. They're really difficult things because, as the member would know, often our city partners—the way we develop cities doesn't always match how we fund education and how we build schools, so it is a challenging thing.

We're here tonight because we had a ruling that said the school year was in jeopardy. We've had another ruling today that says the strike was unlawful. So it's unclear what effect that will have on that ruling. I believe it's important that students get back in school. I do believe in collective bargaining. That's why we're here. I think it's prudent that we're here, given that we don't know how that decision will impact things.

I do appreciate that the member supports full-day learning. I don't agree with some of the descriptions, like that we put the schools in chaos, when we have higher graduation rates, when we have better test scores, when we have more kids going to college and university, when we have full-day learning.

We have tough choices to make. I don't think we're in austerity. There's a fine balance. When you're borrowing at the rate we're borrowing, I don't think you can describe it as austerity.

Thank you very much for the time, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Ted Arnott:** I want to respond to the member for Toronto-Danforth on his speech this evening. I want to compliment him on his enthusiasm and energy. I wish I shared both of those qualities right now. It is in fact 10 to 11 tonight. Many of us have been here for two consecutive nights, sitting till midnight.

Of course, we just heard why we're here. The fact is, we're here because the government passed a motion to have night sittings tonight and have us sitting till midnight. They called for debate on this bill, Bill 103. We are supporting this bill, and we're not putting up additional speakers. As you know, the New Democrats are pretty much carrying this debate this evening, although we are responding with questions and comments. It seems that the New Democrats, unfortunately, are putting



collective bargaining rights ahead of the needs of students, and that is in fact what's happening here tonight.

I know the New Democrats feel passionately about the need to protect collective bargaining rights when they seem to be challenged. But the fact remains that the Education Relations Commission, which is a provincial organization that is charged with the responsibility of determining whether or not the school year is in jeopardy, has concluded that the school year is in jeopardy at these three school boards: the Durham District School Board, the Rainbow District School Board and the Peel District School Board.

So we see this as a very simple issue and very straightforward. The government needs to bring this legislation forward to ensure that the students are back to school as soon as possible. That's why we're supporting this legislation. We would encourage the New Democrats to think about that before they continue this debate any further, and recognize and understand that we've got to put the needs of students first, irrespective of all the other issues that, of course, are important issues and vital issues in terms of the overall debate on education. This needs to be resolved as soon as possible in the interest of these students, and let's get it done tonight.

2250

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** I want to thank the member from Toronto–Danforth. He always does a great job when he talks about education in this province. I was happy to hear him actually raise the issue of cuts to special needs because I've heard a lot of members from the government tonight saying that they really haven't cut those dollars; that there is less enrolment.

On Sunday, I got to attend, with the member from Oshawa, an event called Telling Tales Out of School, by People for Education. It was interesting to be there because we were told by people there that usually it's well-attended by Liberals but, in fact, there was not a Liberal in the house amidst all of this chaos. There were some New Democrats there.

We heard interesting things while we were there. This group actually had done a survey of education leaders late in 2014. They didn't survey unions or teachers; they actually surveyed principals. In the survey released at the end of 2014, 49% of elementary principals and 41% of high school principals said that they recommended to parents that children designated as having special needs need not attend a full day of school because of safety concerns or because the necessary supports are not available for the entire length of time that students are in the building. This forces parents, like the one Peter talked about who he met, to actually find alternative arrangements given that the province's education system requires children to attend for a full day unless they are ill.

There are thousands of students on wait-lists waiting for assessments to determine whether or not they'll receive the supports, and there isn't enough money in the

budget to even give the appropriate supports to the kids that are assessed already. So, in fact, there are cuts, and this is an austerity budget with respect to those kids who really need this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further questions and comments?

**Mr. Han Dong:** I just want to say at this late hour—I just feel that there is something I want to get off my chest. I have a lot of respect for the member from Toronto–Danforth. He's a hard worker, but I think he missed the focus on this issue. It's easy to criticize but it's hard to suggest. I haven't heard any solid suggestions from the members across—nothing tonight.

I want to say that I heard the member calling this bill a cruel Band-Aid, and he thinks this bill is unfair. What is unfair? What's cruel is the kids in Durham at home tonight, or last night, wondering what's going to happen the next day. What's unfair is that the parents, the taxpayers, pay the salary of the educators—they pay our salary—and now we have to put them through this chaos of not knowing what the outcome is. I think that is unfair.

I think we should remember that they are our bosses. They're the reason why we're here: the kids, the parents. We're here to serve. So I say, let's get the students back to school; let's give the parents peace of mind and let's pay some respect to our bosses, to our employers.

Enough is enough; let's get it done. Let's send the students back to school and end this issue once and for all.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Back to the member from Toronto–Danforth for final comments, please.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I want to thank my colleagues from Ottawa South, Wellington–Halton Hills, Welland and Trinity–Spadina. Speaker, you've been around this place long enough—the fact that people listened to my speech enough to be able to comment on it is a compliment in and of itself, and I thank them for that.

I want to speak to the comments of the member from Trinity–Spadina. He wants to settle this issue once and for all. I was around for Bill 115, and I'll tell you, if you continue to undermine the education system, damage the morale of the people who work in the schools, make parents and students aware of the insecurities in our school system, you aren't going to solve the problem. You may well stop something from happening right now, but the eruption later is going to be a lot bigger.

I've been through this cycle now. This is my second round at this kind of conflict in the schools. I saw it under the Harris government back in the 1990s. I have to tell you, it does not end well. It doesn't end well for students and parents, and it certainly doesn't end well for the governments that engage in this kind of conflict. It doesn't end well at all.

I want to say in my few remaining seconds that they asked, "What solutions?" I would say, stop the corporate tax cut agenda that seems to be at the centre of where you guys are at. I looked at the Liberal budget. In the most recent budget, they say, "We cut corporate income tax rates for businesses, providing \$2.3 billion of tax relief

per year." In other words, "We cut our income by more than \$2 billion a year; we'll figure it out somehow." They also implemented significant cuts to high business education tax rates, resulting in ongoing savings of over \$200 million per year for Ontario businesses—\$200 million less for education. That's where all this is coming from.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Pardon my voice tonight; I have a little bit of a cold.

I just want to say that it's been interesting nonetheless to sit here tonight and listen to this particular debate unfold on the government's failure to deal with negotiations. What's been really interesting is that I've been listening to the questions and comments by the government and the opposition. I just want to put a couple of things on the record right at the beginning.

The reason we're here is why? Because the Minister of Education failed to do her job. The minister had a responsibility, given to her by the Premier and by the cabinet and this Legislature, to go out and negotiate with teachers to try to get a collective agreement so that you can in fact negotiate a collective agreement that's fair to the taxpayer, the crown, and fair to the employers, the teachers, and this particular Minister of Education failed to do that. What's been really kind of galling in watching this debate tonight and watching her comments is that she doesn't accept any responsibility for the failure. The reality is that she had a responsibility to do this, and instead what she did was she blamed other people. We saw her come into the House—not in the House, but to the media—saying, "It's those teachers. They want to strike." I'm sorry; I've been around for a long time. I don't know any worker who wants to go out on a picket line. Workers want to go to work, they want to do what they're paid to do and they want to go home at night, do their job during the day or the night shift or whatever it might be.

Teachers didn't want to go on strike. This government, quite frankly, created the chaos that led to where we're at with those three school boards. This particular Minister of Education, quite frankly, has not done her job, and we find ourselves here, with this bill, why? Because the Minister of Education failed to do what she was charged to do. They go to the table—and I have to say, these matters are things that can be dealt with. It's not as if workers across this province, whoever they might be—school board employees, people working in sawmills or people working in mines or whatever it might be—have never negotiated and found ways to be able to resolve their differences at the negotiating table. People have been doing that for years, and in 99% of cases you resolve it at the bargaining table. But this is clearly one of those failures, and I think the government has to accept a certain degree of responsibility that it failed to negotiate a collective agreement with the teachers, that they've in fact engineered this crisis to a large degree, and now they're trying to play the politics around education and people losing their school year and trying to blame everybody else for where they're at.

So here we are with legislation that deals with ordering teachers back to work at a time when the Ontario Labour Relations Board has made a ruling that in fact the teachers have to return to work tomorrow morning. At the beginning of this debate this afternoon, we, not for reasons to be dilatorious or to be obstructionist to the government, called a 30-minute bell on the debate so that I could have a chance to talk to the government House leader and the opposition House leader, Mr. Clark, to say, "Okay, where do we go from here? The Ontario Labour Relations Board has ordered people back to work tomorrow. As a result of that, the classrooms will be back in full swing tomorrow. What is your government going to do? Are you going to withdraw this legislation? Because it seems to me, to a degree, that this legislation is a bit of a moot point." The government didn't have the answer.

**2300**

You know what? In fairness, I get it. The government's lawyers had to figure out: Are there any provisions within this act that need to be passed, in the view of the government, that may not be dealt with by the OLRB decision? I get that. I've been around here for 25 years.

I didn't stand there and say, "Well, I'm going to be obstructionist. I'm going to do" all kinds of things—no. We said to the government, "How are you going to deal with this? If you're going to withdraw the legislation, fine; we're okay with that. If you're not going to, let us know."

The government came back after the 30 minutes and said, "Our lawyers still haven't given us that answer." Fair enough; it's not because of any other reason that the lawyers are still trying to figure it out.

So we are in this debate why? Because the government is in the position of saying, "If the OLRB decision doesn't do what it's supposed to do, we need to make sure that we keep our options open when it comes to back-to-work legislation." That's why we're having this debate tonight: because the government, quite frankly, wants to keep that option open.

It goes back to my first point. Why are we here? Because the Minister of Education failed to get an agreement. That's why we're here. I think that, quite frankly, is a huge admission of failure on the part of the government, the very fact that we have this legislation that's before us being debated today. Is it possible to get an agreement? Absolutely; I think an agreement could have been had. But what you needed to have was the will on the part of the government and Minister of Education to be able to do that. What's clear here is that that has not happened.

To the issue of teachers, students and parents wanting to be in school, I've got no doubt that the vast majority of teachers and students want to be in the classroom. I get that. We've all been around long enough to know that, in fact, students want to do what? Most of them are serious, and they want to be able to do the right thing: complete their education and move on to post-secondary education and move on with their lives. Parents want their kids to be able to learn.



Nobody in this House misses that point. But let's be clear: We're in this particular debate because the government failed to do its job. That's why we're here tonight. For us to be able to deal with this is really on the government.

At one point, the government came to us and said, "This has to be dealt with right away. We want you to pass a unanimous consent motion"—on a bill that nobody had seen. Can you imagine that? The government actually wanted us to agree to a time allocation motion to fast-track this legislation without us having read it. I want to propose a question: Who would go and sign a document with a bank on a loan or any other kind of legal document without first reading it? So of course we as New Democrats are not being dilatorious by saying no to unanimous consent.

We're essentially saying, "Hang on a second. There is a process. First you have to print a bill. Then members of this assembly have to be able to read it." Yes, there is an obligation for some debate on those bills so that we're able to discuss the pros and the cons, the public is able to hear, and this House can come to an agreement. Is it a lot? It's six and a half hours. Let's be real. The world is not going to come to an end because of a six-and-a-half-hour debate. This whole contrived crisis that the government has been trying to point out is happening because we're in a six-and-a-half-hour debate is a bit beyond the pale. Mr. Speaker, the world is not going to come to an end because of a six-and-a-half-hour debate.

The government is, again, trying to play the politics of teacher negotiations rather than actually getting the negotiations done so that we can actually deal with it. I look at some of the members in the House who have been around here for a while, and we've seen different governments deal with teacher negotiations. We understand, as in all negotiations—none of them are easy. There's always somebody who wants something, and we don't want to give as much. That's just the nature of what negotiations are all about. But most governments have found ways to deal with that stuff at the bargaining table.

There has been a failure from time to time where in fact these types of things happen where back-to-work legislation has got to come forward. Sometimes it has been done by all of the parties for various reasons. But in this particular case I'm saying we should never have been here in the first place. If the Minister of Education had done her job and actually tried to work at getting an agreement, I believe that the teachers would have actually settled.

I don't think the teachers are asking for a whole bunch. What they're trying to do is make sure they protect class sizes and deal with issues in a reasonable way when it comes to the responsibility they have and the responsibility we have to the people who pay the bills. I think an accommodation can be made. So it begs the question: Why is the government putting us in this situation? I think the government is putting us in this situation because they are, in a way—it's been raised by a couple of members—trying to raise a crisis in education where none exists.

This goes back to our good friend Mr. Snobelen, who was the first Minister of Education in the Mike Harris government. I'll always remember: He goes and makes a video inside his minister's boardroom—makes this great big speech about they were going to create a crisis in education to be used as a backdrop so they could make the ideological changes they wanted to make in the system. I thought at the time that it was astounding that a Minister of Education would ever say that. In a funny kind of way, the government is not saying it as crassly as Mr. Snobelen, but the effect is about the same. There's no reason that we have to be in this situation.

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I hear the government across the way saying, "Oh, come on, Gilles. That's not fair." Well, it is fair. The Minister of Education came to the media and said, "It's the teachers who want to be on strike. I don't understand what's going on." She was really trying to play as if she didn't know what was going on.

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** Perplexed.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** She was talking about being perplexed, and it was the teachers' fault. Then the government comes into the House and says, "If it's not the teachers' fault and it's not the perplexing fault, then it's got to be the fault of the NDP," always trying to blame somebody else in order to be able to deal with what the problem is.

You are the government. You won a majority in the last election. You have the responsibility and the ability to deal with this issue in a responsible way. What this government should have done was take that responsibility and actually do what they were supposed to do; that is, find a reasonable way to come to an accommodation in these negotiations. Would the teachers have gotten everything they wanted? No. Would the government have gotten everything it wanted? No. That's what negotiations are about; they're about having some form of compromise.

I say again to my good friends and honourable colleagues across the way—of course, there are some of them inside the Conservative heartland of the official opposition, because that's who they are—that there's no need for us to be here. First, we're here because the Minister of Education failed in her job to do what she was supposed to do in negotiations. If anything, she should resign or we should find somebody else to take over that job, because she's clearly failed in that job. Second, we're debating this tonight why? Because the government lawyers have not yet advised the government if the back-to-work from the OLRB is actually dealing with the issues they want to deal with in the legislation.

Now, I don't support this particular legislation, but I understand why the government is doing it. They're doing it why? Because they're trying to keep both of their options open.

This is not a question of New Democrats trying to filibuster debate and trying to slow things down. Heck, we've only got six and a half hours, and we're coming up to it in about 10, 8, 7—we're coming to it pretty quickly. There are only six and a half hours to deal with this.

We're doing what we have to do as a responsible caucus, and that is to raise the issues in debate, to have a debate about what the issues are. Again, I think our members have done a fairly good job of laying that out. I just say to my honourable colleagues across the way that we would have been better off if the Minister of Education had actually done her job.

I just want to end on one point very quickly. Members always like to talk about where they come from and their particular ridings. Members have talked about their ridings and what happens in education. I just have to say that in constituency week last week, I had the great opportunity, like all of you, to do a number of events in my riding. A number of events I did was to speak to grade 5s and to grade 10s. Why? Because that's when they do their civics classes. Man, we are in great shape. Those young people are sharp; they're smart; they're really articulate; they're with it. You've got grade 5 students who are talking about concepts that I would never have understood in grade 5 when I was there, and I've got to say that grade 5 was the best three years of my life.

But I just say this: I think it's a reflection of our education system. We have an education system—a public system of education—that serves our interests well as parents, as students and as the kids themselves.

I've just got to say, I was really pleased at the end of the week, having spoken probably to about 10 schools, to see to what degree the kids are with it, they get it, they know what's going on and they're looking forward to taking their place in this society within some time.

#### *Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I think somebody over there is trying to clear his throat. Would you get that member a glass of water, please?

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for having this time to debate, and I look forward to comments by the members.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Questions or comments?

Seeing none, pursuant to standing order 47(c), I'm now required to interrupt the proceedings and announce that there has been more than six and a half hours of debate on the motion for second reading of this bill. This debate will therefore be deemed adjourned unless the government House leader specifies otherwise.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** No further debate, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** No further debate.

*Second reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### AGRICULTURE INSURANCE ACT (AMENDING THE CROP INSURANCE ACT, 1996), 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ASSURANCE AGRICOLE (MODIFIANT LA LOI DE 1996 SUR L'ASSURANCE-RÉCOLTE)

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 26, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / *Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

Mr. Leal has moved third reading of Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? I heard a no.

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell—but hold on. We have a vote that has been deferred.

"To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly: Pursuant to standing order 28(h), I request the vote on third reading of Bill 40 be deferred until deferred votes on Wednesday, May 27, 2015."

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Orders of the day.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** The House leader has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that we—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** All those in favour, say "aye."

All those against, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

The House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 2314.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiles, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cookville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przewdziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short









## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Tuesday 26 May 2015 / Mardi 26 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Protecting the School Year Act, 2015, Bill 103, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 sur la protection de l'année scolaire, projet de loi 103, M. Flynn**

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4607
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4610
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4611
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4611
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4611
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4612
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4612
Ms. Eleanor McMahon .....	4615
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4615
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4615
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4616
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4616
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4616
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4618
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4619
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4619
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4619
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4620
Hon. Dipika Damerla .....	4620
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4620
Mr. John Fraser .....	4623
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4623
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4624
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4624
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4624
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4625
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4627
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4628
Mr. Joe Dickson .....	4628

Mr. Jeff Yurek .....	4628
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4629
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4629
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4632
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4632
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4633
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4633
Mr. Michael Mantha .....	4634
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4634
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4637
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4637
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4638
Mr. Lorenzo Berardinetti .....	4638
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4638
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4638
Mr. John Fraser .....	4641
Mr. Ted Arnott .....	4641
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4642
Mr. Han Dong .....	4642
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4642
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4643
Second reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4645

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### **Agriculture Insurance Act (Amending the Crop Insurance Act, 1996), 2015, Bill 40, Mr. Leal / Loi de 2015 sur l'assurance agricole (modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte), projet de loi 40, M. Leal**

Third reading vote deferred .....	4645
-----------------------------------	------



No. 88

N° 88

ISSN 1180-2987

**Legislative Assembly  
of Ontario**

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

**Assemblée législative  
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

**Official Report  
of Debates  
(Hansard)**

**Journal  
des débats  
(Hansard)**

**Wednesday 27 May 2015**

**Mercredi 27 mai 2015**



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday 27 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Mercredi 27 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### TIME ALLOCATION

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 47 and notwithstanding any other standing order or special order of the House relating to Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, when Bill 103 is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill, without further debate or amendment, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may then be immediately called; and

That, when the order for third reading is called, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

That no deferral of the second or third reading votes pursuant to standing order 28(h) shall be permitted; and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Labour has moved notice of motion number 39.

Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this motion. I would like to say at the outset that our government—and I'm sure I speak for all members of the House—is always concerned when students are out of the classroom and not learning, for whatever reason. That is why the government asked the Education Relations Commission to advise as to whether this school year is in jeopardy in light of the strikes that were taking place in Durham, Sudbury and Peel.

Earlier this week, the Education Relations Commission advised that the school year is indeed in jeopardy for secondary students in Durham, Sudbury and Peel. In light of this advice, we introduced legislation that would have put our students back into the classroom yesterday, had the third party agreed to unanimous consent for speedy

passage of this bill. This legislation is designed to get 72,000 students back into the classroom so that they can complete their studies for this year.

We did not and we do not take this decision lightly. It was informed by the advice of the Education Relations Commission, and it's a real response to the concerns of students and their parents in these communities.

Mr. Speaker, as you would well be aware, the Ontario Labour Relations Board has weighed in on these matters, as well, and has also ruled now that the local strikes in Durham, in Sudbury and in Peel are indeed unlawful. Students and teachers are back in the classroom today. The OLRB has ordered that the local strikes in Durham, Sudbury and Peel must stop, and that stoppage involves a moratorium for at least two weeks.

Our proposed legislation will allow students the opportunity to successfully complete their school year without any further disruption. I think that's what we all want. This legislation ensures that students remain in school for the rest of this school year. We must ensure that students in the affected school boards that I've mentioned have the same opportunity to complete their school year.

The Ministry of Education has been working with these boards on a daily basis to ensure the remaining days of the school year will be used for learning.

Our government believes this legislation is necessary because we do not want those strikes that have been deemed to be unlawful to continue after the two-week moratorium has expired.

This is about protecting the school year for students, ensuring our students continue to achieve excellence. It's unfortunate that one party in the House continues to hold up that legislation, and I say that sincerely. I'm calling on the members of that party to help us protect the school year for students, join with the rest of us that are ready to move ahead, and make sure those students get back into the classrooms and stay there until the end of the school year.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm probably going to be even shorter than the Minister of Labour. I remember—

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** You are shorter.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I am short. Thanks, Percy. I am shorter than the minister, probably by about six inches.

I'm a little shorter than you, Minister.

I worked for my predecessor, Bob Runciman, in 2009—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Good man.



**Mr. Steve Clark:**—thank you, Minister—when the House was recalled to deal with that strike. The three parties, by consent, moved that legislation forward. I think it was a Sunday afternoon when they got called back. I know there was a lot of negotiation between the three parties.

Our critic for education, Garfield Dunlop, the member for Simcoe North, has expressed concern for several months in this Legislature about this government and their handling of the situation in our classrooms and in our schools. Although in the past I haven't been a big fan of closing off debate, I think our party has been very clear right from the start that we were prepared to move forward, act quickly, and have this piece of legislation passed.

This motion allows each party to speak for a period of time and then allows a vote on this bill. I'm not going to belabour the point. I was very honest with the New Democrats this morning that I wasn't going to use my time. We want to see this move forward. I think it's time for all three parties to come together. Let's get the bill passed and let's get it moving.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** As always, Speaker, it's an honour to be able to stand in this House today and speak on this motion. I think, from all members and all sides of the House, the most important issue here is the families, the children, their parents and the educational system.

I'd like to comment on a few things that the government has said, not just over the course of this debate but over the course of this whole debacle with the kids being out of class because the teachers felt so aggrieved that they felt forced to strike.

First, the reason that this legislation was brought forward, Bill 103, as stated by the Minister of Labour, was to get the kids back to school. Well, the kids are back to school because of the OLRB decision. So we're debating what is a moot law, in a way. But not altogether, Speaker, because what this law is now doing is, it's back-to-work legislation in case the teachers go on strike again. That's what this is.

0910

So if you have pre-emptive back-to-work legislation, one has to ask the question: Is the government really serious about the negotiations? It's hard to negotiate when one of the parties has, figuratively speaking, a gun to the other party's head. In a way, this OLRB decision gives the government a second chance because now they have a bit of breathing room to actually truly negotiate. So in a way, this is a good thing.

One issue that we really take exception to—the Minister of Education, during question period a few days ago, basically lobbied it on to the third party that this was all our fault. The last time I checked, Speaker, this was a majority government. I can remember, when the Premier was campaigning for leader, that she was going to do things differently. I'd really like to make this clear: We are at the eleventh hour of this issue, but we are dealing

with a majority government that seems to be spinning their wheels with these labour negotiations. It's this government, because of their lack of will of negotiation, that has kept the children from going to class. At the last minute, to say, "Well, it's obviously the third party"—the third party in a majority government? Come on, now. We try and do as much as we can to make regulations and laws as effective as we can for the people who we represent; I think all members in the House do that. But let's be clear: This is a majority government, a majority government whose Premier and whose Minister of Education could have fully seen this coming. This should not be news.

Quite frankly, Speaker, the idea that "Well, it's obviously the third party because they wouldn't support that unanimous consent motion"—we didn't support unanimous consent because we believe that everything in this House, in a democratic society, should be debated. Should it be debated ad nauseam? That's a point of contention, but it should be debated. Because the government had failed to conclude serious negotiations—

**Miss Monique Taylor:** To do their job.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Yes—had failed to do their job. As a cover, as a decoy, they're blaming the third party. That's just not the way it works, Speaker.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Do you want the kids in school or don't you?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** We all want the kids in school.

As a majority government, you have been dealing with this since the election last June. We are not the people who are keeping the kids out of school, Minister. You're the Minister of Labour; we've got the Minister of Education, the Premier—you have all the power. And that's the way it is. Regrettably for the third party, that's the fact. At this point, for the ministers and the government to blame the third party for their lack of negotiation is just disingenuous.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** And funny. It's really funny.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** One of the members said it's funny. It's not really funny. It shows a lack of leadership. It shows a lack of leadership on the government's side. A government takes credit for all kinds of things, but it also should take responsibility for its occasional, sometimes fairly frequent—in this case, absolute—failure to handle this issue. As I've previously stated, this OLRB hearing has given the government a bit of breathing room. Last night, when our party rang the bells, it wasn't to be deleterious; it was to give the government breathing room to actually figure out what was going on with the OLRB hearing.

It's quite simple. The government hasn't done their job since being elected.

The government has been given this breathing room—*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Sit down.

Are we finished with the cross-floor dialogue? Thank you. You got the message. Good.

And when I'm standing, no one speaks. Thank you. Continue.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Thank you, Speaker.

The government has had the opportunity to deliver on their promise of being a different type of government, of providing actual, true negotiations. That's one of the reasons why people voted for—regrettably, in our opinion—a majority Liberal government. But they haven't delivered on this promise, because we see the same old same old. Negotiations have failed. The teachers were forced, basically, out on strike.

We're talking about back-to-work legislation, which the government says is developed and is put in the House because of the ERC, and then, in the middle of all of this, the OLRB rules.

It is very complicated, but what it also shows is a total lack of planning on the government's side. If the government continues on this haphazard, say-one-thing-and-do-something-else—and then if that doesn't work, blame the third party, we are going to continue with crisis after crisis after crisis, and they are going to continue to impact one of the most important things in our province's future, and that's the education of our children.

They've got a second chance with this OLRB decision. There's a time allocation motion we're debating here to force this legislation through.

We are not here to obstruct this process. We are here to make sure that in a democratic system, we can put remarks on the record, Speaker, which need to be heard. And one remark that needs to be heard is that the most important thing to all of us is the children, the students, in this province.

For the government to blame the third party, when they're a majority government, is a cop-out, when they should take responsibility and leadership. If the current people who are in negotiations can't do it, maybe they have to replace the current negotiators. The government needs to move ahead and quit looking for cover and actually do its job on this.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

Mr. Flynn has moved government motion number 39. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Orders of the day.

0920

ONTARIO IMMIGRATION ACT, 2015  
LOI DE 2015 SUR L'IMMIGRATION  
EN ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 12, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 49, Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker. Yes, I guess we are shuffling right along in the orders of the day today and we're going to talk about immigration.

It is a pleasure to stand and bring the voices of Windsor–Tecumseh to this debate because, as many of you know, when it comes to a diverse population, the city of Windsor and the region and the county of Essex were the fifth most diverse area in all of Canada. Our immigrants have built our communities. It started quite a while ago, of course. We had a lot of European settlers come to work in our mines, to work in our car factories, to build our roads and high-rises, and we are a better community because of that.

We celebrate our diversity; we celebrate our immigrants; we celebrate our multiculturalism. We have great festivals in the summer, festivals such as the Carrousel of the Nations, which, no matter what ethnic group you may be from or what your roots are, there's always an opportunity to get out with friends and family. They'll enjoy the food, the music.

If it wasn't for our immigrants and welcoming arms, this bill wouldn't be needed.

Ontario is playing catch-up. Finally, we're following in the footsteps of Quebec.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** We're the first province outside of Quebec to have that.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Outside of Quebec; that's what I just said, Minister. I just said that: You're following in the footsteps of Quebec, much like you are, in recent months, by having the Premier of Quebec come and address the Legislature, much like in recent months when you had discussions with the Premier of Quebec on any number of other things. I don't see that as a negative, as a slam against the government, that you're following in the footsteps of Quebec.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Or you could say we're ahead of all the other provinces.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** The other provinces—if you want to talk about Alberta for a while, Minister, I'd gladly talk about recent events in Alberta. It is an interesting bill, but not quite as interesting as what New Democrats have recently accomplished in the great province of Alberta. If you want me to talk about other provinces, Minister, I'll gladly lend a hand on that one.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** A majority.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** A majority government, New Democrats, province of Alberta?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Point of order.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** A point of order from the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and responsible for the Pan Am/Parapan Am games.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Through the Speaker, I'd suggest the member stick to the actual legislation that's being debated.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I'd like the minister's input, but unfortunately the minister was in



dialogue across the floor and got him off his game plan. So maybe if you were quiet, he'd get back to his issue.

Continue.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you for that very unbiased ruling, Speaker. As a matter of fact, I was, I thought, talking about Bill 49. The minister kept giving me speaking notes across the aisle. I just happen to have about 15 minutes of notes on my desk upstairs, but I didn't bring them down this morning because I thought my good friends in the Tory caucus were going to have more to say on the other orders that were called earlier today.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Are you going to blame Mike Harris?

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** No, I won't be blaming Mike Harris, or the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper. I leave it to others to do that.

But I will say a few things, Minister; thank you for the reminder. I will say a few things about Bill 49, the Ontario Immigration Act. It would obviously, as we've already discussed across the floor, grant Ontario more control over immigration and settlement specifically as it concerns workforce placement and the setting of quotas.

Speaker, every now and again, I'll take a cab from the Walkerville train station in Windsor when I get home at 11, 11:30 at night on a Thursday after leaving Queen's Park. I'll hop into the cab, strike up a dialogue with the driver and, more often than not, the driver of that cab is from another country and he came here for a better life. More often than not, that cab driver has not only one university degree but sometimes several. They've been trained in specific fields, but they come here and the jobs just aren't there for them, so they end up driving a cab.

I know from time to time in this House we keep hearing about the shortage of skilled trades professionals and that, in the future, we're going to have a real shortage of skilled tradespeople. I believe that is one of the objectives of the minister's bill and what this is aimed at doing. If you're going to set a quota, and you need welders, no matter what country they come from, you might just be looking for welders to come into the country and fill those jobs that are there.

Speaker, I was so thrown off by the minister's comments earlier from across the floor, I don't know if I forgot to mention that I'll be sharing my time with the member from London-Fanshawe—now that she has arrived.

I just want to say, as the member is ready to roll I'm sure, that I hope to have more to say on this bill maybe later on today when I finally bring my notes down from upstairs.

So, thank you, Speaker, and with your permission, I'll throw it over to the member from London-Fanshawe.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thanks so graciously to the member from Windsor-Tecumseh—

*Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Hold on. Sorry. We have to do questions and comments first. You can do a two-minute questions and comments—

**Interjection:** No. They're sharing time.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Point of order.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** The member from Windsor-Tecumseh said he was going to share his time with the member from London-Fanshawe.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, I get direction from the Clerks' table. Which way is it?

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay. Our mistake—I'll share that.

Continue.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Good morning, Speaker. It's very refreshing to be here this morning and see everybody working together so that we can actually debate this bill that's been long overdue. It's been over 10 years to get an immigration bill in Ontario, to move immigration forward and make sure people have the opportunity to come to Ontario, work here and hopefully plant their permanent roots here, raise their family and be part of our great province.

It's my pleasure once again to rise in this House and speak in my capacity as New Democratic critic for immigration on third reading of Bill 49, the Ontario Immigration Act. I've also been able to speak for my party and on behalf of immigration advocates on Bill 49 previously in debate in this House and at committee. I was pleasantly surprised that in this majority environment that a couple of my amendments—New Democratic amendments—were actually passed through committee. That was a pleasant surprise.

We've said it before: This bill can be seen as a good step in the right direction. Ontario has been waiting for this bill, and it's long overdue. It's been over 10 years and, finally, we have an immigration strategy from this government. While this bill does take action on some important issues, the reality is, the big picture hasn't really changed at all. Primarily, this bill is meant to align Ontario's Immigration Strategy with the Harper Conservatives' federal legislative changes to immigration programs and services.

Speaker, let's face it. It no longer comes as a shock or surprise for the Ontario Liberals to be taking plays right out of the Stephen Harper playbook. It's the same play they are using in their attempts to ram the sale of Hydro One through the Legislature with no consultation throughout the province and, worse, no mandate from the people of the province.

I will acknowledge that our provincial Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade has undertaken to seek support for this bill and has reached across the floor in his efforts to do so.

0930

Again, I was surprised to see that two NDP amendments were accepted in committee. I was disappointed that of the 13 amendments we proposed, only two were supported, because those other 11 amendments were very pertinent to this bill. But we got traction on two, so two out of 13, I guess, is better than none out of 13.

**Miss Monique Taylor:** In a majority, when they have all the power.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** That's right, in a majority, when they can kind of dictate.

Bill 49, while a step in the right direction, is missing vital components that would truly allow Ontario to take the lead in immigration standards. Instead, we continue to give that lead over to other provinces.

New Democrats have long called for updates to Ontario's lagging immigration policies. For more than 10 years, this province has sat on its hands and done nothing in this area. Our previous critic, from Beaches—East York, talked about how this has been long overdue. He was a very passionate member. We truly miss him on this side, and we miss his insight on immigration. This is not the first time that I have mentioned this. I'm sure this government isn't surprised about that comment.

Even though Ontario receives more immigrants than all the western provinces, all the Atlantic provinces and the three territories combined, Ontario has been lacking in a comprehensive immigration strategy that takes into account the challenges we face as a province as well as those faced by newcomers.

So, Speaker, what's in the bill? Let's take a look at what's in the bill and what this bill actually does, before we talk about it and what it excludes or ignores.

The bill proposes to give authority to the province to establish and govern immigrant selection programs for both temporary and permanent immigrants. It further permits Ontario to set the target levels for the number of persons chosen by Ontario selection programs. It invests new powers in the minister to conduct research, organize educational and training programs, and appoint committees on immigration-related issues.

It allows the minister to establish registries for both employers and recruiters that are interested in participating in the Ontario selection programs under the Ontario Immigration Act. It sets out some guidelines to monitor and detect possible contraventions of the Ontario Immigration Act in order to prevent immigration fraud and to protect program integrity. It sets out guidelines in that regard.

The minister is also permitted to collect, use, and disclose personal information in order to carry out these functions.

The OIA also allows the minister to enter into agreements with the federal government, other provinces, and even municipalities. The bill lays out a compliance and enforcement regime, including inspection and investigation powers. Offences and penalties for both individuals and organizations would require regulatory change and federal buy-in.

Under the OIA, applicants to employer registries can request an internal review regarding a decision made. The bill aligns requirements under the Regulated Health Professions Act with those in the Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act in terms of timelines in decisions-making and access to records. This fulfills a request by the office of the Fairness Commissioner.

The act allows for regulation-making authority in areas such as program administration, program eligibility, compliance, internal review and payment of fees.

These new powers for the minister contained within the act appear to be relatively harmless and almost appropriate.

I am especially eager to see Ontario become an active agent in conducting our own research, organizing educational programs and appointing committees.

My only question is—

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** When I was the minister of citizenship and immigration, I didn't have a question the whole time—not one.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** And this is not a question-and-answer period, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Minister, you forgot about me. You're supposed to go through me, if you want. You're not even in a debate on this one.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You. Yes, you. You're having an ongoing conversation with the presenter.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I was just talking to my friend—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Well, talk to your friend. Don't talk to the one across the road. And if you want to talk to your friend, take your friend outside and talk to him.

Go ahead.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, if the minister would like to speak to me later, I'd be happy to have a conversation outside the Legislature. As you mentioned, he's not even here to address it.

Back to the debate, Speaker—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Who wasn't here? You know we're not supposed to say—

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Oh, yes—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** You'll withdraw that.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I respectfully withdraw.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Thank you. It's going to be a good day.

*Interjection:* It's going to be a long day.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, it's going to be one of those days, isn't it? Until midnight.

My only question is exactly to what end these endeavours will be undertaken by the ministry. The ministry has not shown any form of leadership around the current plight facing Ontario's immigrants, and this bill seems more interested in conferring powers to the minister than changing the landscape. It's clear: Federal power over immigration remains paramount.

So what should we do in the face of such a paradox? My NDP colleagues and I agree that in light of federal authority in this area, we are afforded the luxury of moving forward with legislation that is meaningful, legislation that tempers our economic needs with our moral and ethical obligations to provide newcomers with



the supports they need to help this province grow. Quite frankly, the facts are in and the results are plain: We need newcomers as much as they need us. We are asking people to come from around the world to become members of our family, to help our province grow and achieve our goals, but what are we doing to welcome, protect and see newcomers thrive in this province?

I want to spend some time talking about the reality of immigration by taking a moment to look at the numbers and current trends. Over the past 20 years, Ontario has welcomed more than 2.4 million landed immigrants, which signifies almost 52% of all immigrants coming to Canada. This number also illustrates that Ontario continues to be the first choice for immigrants coming to Canada. That's really something to be proud of. To have people come from countries all over the world and settle in Ontario is a testament to what Ontario has to offer to its citizens in many ways. We're talking about health care, education—at one time, there were job opportunities that were very plentiful.

We saw our share of immigrants to Canada drop by almost one third. Markedly, in 2010, Ontario received 118,114 permanent residents, representing 42.1% of total admissions to Canada, which was well below our historical average. This was Ontario's lowest share in 30 years, from a high of almost 60% in 2001 to 40% in 2011.

Toronto, in particular, seems to have the greatest draw for those immigrating to Canada. According to Statistics Canada, Toronto's metro population has now surpassed six million people, meaning that Toronto alone accounts for 17% of Canada's 35 million people. They further claim that the main driver of this growth was foreign immigrants. In fact, every Canadian city with a population over one million can attribute most of its population growth to international migration. About half of the people living in Toronto were born in other countries, and this city is said to be the most multicultural city in the world.

In spite of this uptake in immigration numbers in our major cities, it is estimated that Ontario will face a shortage of 364,000 skilled workers by the year 2025. That translates into an immigration demand that exceeds our current intake by more than twice over in order to offset the decline in Ontario's labour force.

What is behind this decline in Ontario's labour force? Well, the answer is socially driven. Our baby boomers are coming of retirement age at a rate we simply can't keep up with. Combine that with our historical decline in fertility rates and the picture becomes a little clearer, all of which points to a steady decline of Canadian participation in our own labour force.

0940

Historically, economic growth has been the key driver behind labour requirements in Canada. However, it will no longer be the case in the coming years. Instead, job openings due to retirement will be the major driver behind labour demand in the future, far outpacing the number of new jobs created by economic expansion. Pro-

jections from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada indicate that roughly 6.4 million jobs will open up in the coming decade. Roughly 70% of these jobs will be due to replacement demand, primarily as a result of retirements, deaths and emigration, while the remaining 30% will come from new economic activity and the demand for new labour requirements.

Simply stated, this trend is driven by our changing societal demographics. The slowing in our overall population expansion and the aging of the population are clearly beginning—and will continue—to negatively impact our labour force growth.

In the coming decade, we will need to recognize the labour market challenges of replacement demand. In the coming decade, there will be a need for approximately 4.4 million jobs. Some 3.7 million vacancies will be caused by retirements. It is estimated that the number of Canadians expecting to retire is going to increase steadily over the next decade. In 2010, we experienced approximately 300,000 retirements. By 2010, it is estimated that number will rise to more than 415,000. Further, it is estimated that an additional 700,000 positions will need to be filled due to death prior to retirement, and to emigration.

Therefore, it is vital that we appreciate and understand the importance of our immigration strategy beyond our labour market demand, but our socio-cultural needs as well.

Our demographics and populations are changing, and immigration will play a vital role in supplementing our workforce. Researchers have estimated that within this decade, immigration will account for all the net growth in our working-age population. By that, I don't mean to infer that Canadian-born individuals will not make any contributions to our labour force, because, Speaker, we know we have highly educated, highly trained people in Canada and in Ontario as well. The majority of the new entrants into the labour force will be made up of those who are leaving school. While newcomers will continue to be a vital aspect of our labour supply in Ontario, it has also been noted that recent immigrants seem to have the weakest economic outcomes, despite having very high levels of education attainment.

These concerns are significant. If declining financial outcomes among recent immigrants persist, we must be ready to respond. Whether it is a moral imperative that drives us to address those needs, or an economic inclination, it is clear that it serves us well as a province to ensure that immigrants in Ontario are provided with every opportunity to succeed.

The growing demands in health care, specifically in the caregiver program, highlight our need for an adaptive immigration strategy. We have seen some changes to policy, specifically the provincial nominee program, which is designed to facilitate immigration of foreign nationals to specific provinces and territories in Canada in order to target explicit economic needs.

Yet we struggle to adapt to our policy changes. While seeking to facilitate this immigration, we have yet to

move towards a fully comprehensive system of recognition of foreign-trained professionals and their credentials. Individuals who immigrate to Canada under the provincial nominee program have the skills, education and work experience needed to make an immediate economic contribution to the province or territory which nominates them. Since the inception of this program, the focus has been on immediate occupational needs identified by the participating provinces. The provincial nominee program rules recognize that provincial governments are best positioned to determine their own specific economic needs with respect to immigration. Labour market needs vary over time due to a number of factors, such as general economic cycles, rates of growth in particular sectors and demographics in particular occupations. Generally, the program is viewed as being more responsive to more immediate needs in the labour market as compared to the Federal Skilled Worker program.

PNP applicants receive priority processing while most FSW applicants do not, and the PNP is broader based in terms of the occupational labour market field. Since the inception of the PNP, comparisons regarding labour market outcomes of the FSW program are often made. However, one must remember important differences between the two economic streams of immigration. The FSW program addresses knowledge-based and longer-term needs for skilled professionals, whereas the PNP tends to focus on short-term occupational and specific labour needs identified by a province.

Speaker, there's something too I want to share, and I did touch on it when I debated earlier. It was some information that was gathered through the Auditor General's report, so I just want to read from that. Some of them are quotes that we got from the Auditor General's report.

Last year, the Auditor General did a comprehensive review of Ontario's provincial nominee program and, quite frankly, uncovered some serious issues in the ministry. I'll read the quote from the report, which I've written out here:

"The provincial nominee program ... is delivered by the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade. Through the program, immigrants are nominated, or recommended, to the federal government based on their potential economic contributions to the province. Since the program's inception in 2007, the province has nominated about 6,600 people. As of April 30, 2014, 3,900 nominees and 3,200 of their family members have become permanent residents through the program.

"Other significant findings included the following:

"The ministry delayed formally reporting potential abuse of the program to the federal government and the appropriate law enforcement agencies." So that was a concern. "This potentially delayed any action against people who might have been abusing the program.

"Program staff did not follow up on questionable files that were approved but flagged for follow-up. About 260 files were flagged between October 2011 and November 2013, but only 8% had been followed up on at the time of

our audit." That's the Auditor General. "As of April 2014, 71% of all nominees flagged for follow-up had become landed immigrants.

"Thirty immigrant representatives submitted applications that were denied on the basis that they contained misleading or fraudulent information.

"On a follow-up of previous approved foreign worker nominees who had become landed immigrants to Ontario, 38% of the sampled nominees were suspected to have misrepresented themselves.

"Even though the ministry says publicly that the applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, certain applications were given priority and processed at least three times faster than others.

"There are significant data integrity issues with the program's computer system. Controls over the case management system and nomination certificates need to be strengthened." This is what the Auditor General is talking about, Speaker.

"In 2013, two thirds of the nominees were international students who obtained a post-secondary degree in Ontario but did not have a job offer at the time of nomination."

Of specific note for me were the "significant data integrity issues with the program's computer system" coupled with the fact that there was no privacy officer assigned to work with the program. Bill 49 is seeking to allow the minister to have access to highly confidential and personal information, and yet neither the government nor this ministry demonstrated that they have the capacity to protect the privacy of the individuals participating in the program.

In fact, this government program can't even report on the effectiveness of the program, nor can it speak to the experience of those people who have previously been nominated through the program.

The Auditor General also found "there is a significant risk that the program might not always be nominating qualified individuals who can be of economic benefit to Ontario. This is because it lacks the necessary tools, including policies, procedures and training, to guide program staff to make consistent and sound selection decisions, especially in a work environment that relies heavily on temporary staff and where turnover is high."

**0950**

This is, again, what the Auditor General has identified as problematic to delivering this program.

They also found "that the ministry did not share program integrity concerns with both internal staff and external parties"—including law enforcement and regulators—"who needed to know and could act on them accordingly."

Furthermore, they found "that program staff had not been provided with clear guidelines on how to deal with potentially fraudulent situations, and the program had not established anti-fraud mechanisms. The program lacks a strong data management system and program integrity function that would help detect high-risk applications. The program's evaluations have not been thorough and



current enough to track what happens to nominees from the various program components after they are selected.”

So it's almost like there was never any follow-up to this program to see if it was working, if it was successful or what the outcomes were for people who entered through this program.

“Furthermore, the ministry does not have strong monitoring procedures to ensure that” all “nominees are indeed working in skilled occupations contributing to the economy after arrival”—so, again, checks and balances.

These are fairly damning findings to overcome while asking for our support in this chamber to afford greater powers to this unproven ministry. Yes, you're asking for all kinds of extra authority, but the track record that has been reported by the Auditor General is not a glowing report.

This Premier and this government tout themselves as champions of transparency and accountability. We all know where we can go with that, but I'm going to stay here on the debate. Yet the Auditor General went on to say, “The program lacks processes to ensure transparency and avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest: Even though the ministry states publicly that applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, certain applications are given priority and processed at least three times faster than non-prioritized files. Although there might be instances where this practice would be justified, for example, when an applicant's legal status to stay in Canada is about to lapse,” they noted “one situation where files submitted by a certain representative were prioritized. In this case, the representative was a former program employee. In addition, some representatives were contacting program staff directly to ask for extensions in submitting documents or to request that their clients' applications be prioritized.” It sounds like one process for the well-connected and another for the rest of us.

“In contrast, at Citizenship and Immigration Canada, only a small number of people deal with representatives, and representatives can only make inquiries in writing.”

These were the kinds of proposals my party sought to introduce through the committee, proposals that would help instill fairness and transparency while creating a level playing field for all. Yet once again, only two out of our 13 amendments were accepted.

It's very ironic that the ministry responsible for helping immigrants land and find employment are themselves, in many cases, temporary employees. I'll illustrate that, in my debate, from the Auditor General's findings. According to the Auditor General's report, many staff received no written guidance or job training, and turnover is quite high.

“As of March 31, 2014, only 20% of program staff were permanent full-time ministry employees.... From January 2012 to June 2014, 31 staff left the program and 59 started with the program.” There's that high turnover rate.

The program “is heavily staffed with temporary or short-term employees. This has contributed to increased

turnover and the risk of inconsistent decision-making, which in turn requires increased oversight and continual training.

“When the program began, it was approved to hire up to nine full-time positions or the equivalent” of full-time employees (FTEs). “At that time, the nomination limit was 500.”

So you'd have your nine full-time employees and your nomination limit was 500 applicants coming in.

“In 2014, approved staffing increased to 16 FTEs when the nomination limit reached 2,500.” That's a huge number. You're going from 500 as a nomination limit to 2,500 as a nomination limit, and the increment in employees didn't really proportion out that increase in nomination limit. At the time of the audit, the program was only utilizing nine of the 16 FTEs, so again, these people were obviously very overworked.

“In order to meet staffing needs, the ministry re-deployed its staff from other programs and staff from one other ministry. In addition, in 2010, the program began seconding people from the federal government, and in 2012, it began to hire seasonal employees,” and that is full-time employees on annually recurring fixed-term contracts who work 10 months of the year. “These temporary staff are not included in the approved staffing complement of 16, but the ministry has obtained funding to cover the costs of the temporary workforce.

“As of March 31, 2014, the program had 45 staff in total” and “expects to continue to employ a mix of permanent and seasonal staff, but dependence on a temporary workforce could result in more turnover because staff may leave, as has happened, for more permanent positions elsewhere.” More secure jobs: That's what people are looking for.

“From January 2012 to June 2014, 31 staff left the program. In the same period, 59 individuals started with the program, excluding returning seasonal staff.” This illustrates that instability created a risk “to the program of inconsistency in decision-making, which warrants increased oversight and constant training of staff.” Again, the irony of the employees to this program working under precarious employment conditions themselves while helping newcomers to find good, stable employment would be amusing if it wasn't so unfair.

In addition, although the program has existed for more than eight years, the ministry still does “not have an operating manual to guide processing staff in making consistent eligibility decisions.” That was something that was very much brought to the forefront from the Auditor General: training and guidelines for staff who are actually going through these nomination applications. Moreover, at the start of the audit, none of the application-processing staff who assessed files had received any training specific to the program. So you're thrown in the job.

What has changed that will inspire Ontarians and newcomers alike to trust your leadership and program management abilities? That would be something I would actually like to talk to the minister about, or even get

something in writing: What steps has he taken from the Auditor General's findings to get his ministry clerically up to date, training his staff and to ensure people are going to, first of all—hopefully, when they come to work there—gain skills and experience? That's what makes the employee valuable, or someone who works for you: The longer they're there, the better they are at their job. So it would be nice to know what steps they've taken to ensure that when people get that job, they are willing to stay for the long haul. That also asks: What will be different under Bill 49? What is the government's response to its own shortcomings as an employer?

I'd like to talk a little bit about caregivers because, again, in Ontario we have a need for caregivers. Many, many of those caregivers come to Ontario; they immigrate here. I think that's something that we need to highlight in Ontario and talk about, and make sure that it's on record.

When we talk about caregivers, we want to know what answers this government has for their own employees, let alone those newcomers facing the precarious work that we talked about, as in the case of Ontario's live-in caregivers. Live-in caregivers are predominantly immigrant women, coming to us from countries around the world. They work in people's homes providing vital care and nurturing our aging population, young children and people with disabilities. They come here as temporary foreign workers, without access to full immigration status.

**1000**

On one hand, we are clearly aware of the needs and demands of our aging population, yet our federal counterparts have approved fewer than 10% of requests by potential employers to bring in foreign caregivers under their revised program. They face enormous challenges, and in some cases abuse, while our labour laws exclude many of their working conditions. Last November in Ontario, there was an on-the-job death of a Filipino nanny, Marites Angana. Marites came to Ontario to take a job as a live-in caregiver but suffered a head injury from a fall in her employer's garage on November 28. She died of a brain hemorrhage on December 2 at Toronto Western Hospital, leaving behind a 13-year-old son in the Philippines.

Speaker, this is not an unusual story for a foreign caregiver coming into Ontario. As I have said, the majority of caregivers are women. Many of them come here to support their extended family or their own immediate children, who are left at home in their countries. To listen to this story—to have Marites fall in the garage and end up suffering death because of this, and leaving her 13-year-old son, certainly isn't the only story in Ontario with regard to caregivers.

My office met with friends of Marites and several groups who were seeking to help with repatriation of her body and wanting to prevent this needless tragedy from happening again. We challenged Ontario's Ministry of Labour to look into the circumstances of Marites, even going as far as to call for a coroner's inquest into the

death, but have heard nothing but silence in return. We haven't heard any response to that request.

According to the International Labour Organization, "Domestic workers are frequently expected to work longer hours than other workers and do not have the same rights to weekly rest that are enjoyed by other workers." They go on to state that some 83% of domestic workers are women.

We know that live-in caregivers are playing a key role in providing this care in Ontario, yet they are treated unfairly by both federal and provincial governments. This begs the question I referred to earlier about what kind of immigration strategies are we promoting here in Ontario. This government continues to refuse to bring legislation forward that protects temporary foreign workers in their work environments. There has been no action taken by the Ministry of Labour in regard to protecting the workplaces of Ontario's live-in caregivers, or to address the precarious nature of their work, yet we have very high expectations for the people we charge to care for our children and our aging parents.

Speaker, if you were going to have a caregiver—I'll speak from my personal experience. If I was going to have a caregiver in my home looking after my parents or my children, I certainly would want to make sure that they were happy in what they did and that they had all the rights of someone working in another workplace, because their role—you can't have a more important career or work than looking after someone who is a child or a vulnerable senior, because your care is in their hands. So I think it's so important that we actually look at foreign caregivers and try to make their workplaces fair.

With the care of caregivers, we know that they are predominantly women, as we've said, and yet where is our moral obligation to promote their well-being and the status of all women in Ontario? Under the new rules, caregivers will no longer have universal access to permanent resident status after working in Canada for two years—again, a change like that isn't helping. They must now apply under two categories: those caring for children, and those caring for people with high medical needs. Ottawa will now allow 2,750 caregivers under both new streams to access permanent residency, for a total of 5,500 applicants a year. The annual average of caregivers who came to Canada over the past five years is over 8,000. That's well above the cap that Ottawa has set.

So how will Ontario seek to reconcile the federal regulations with the needs of Ontarians? A recent study shows that today as much as 80% of the home care services provided to older adults come from caregivers. However, as the baby boomer generation ages and as they didn't have as many children as their parents, the same in-family resources will simply not be available.

I know that my parents, when they came to Canada with five children—yes, it was five—they came to Ontario. We lived here in Ontario with five children.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Where did they come from?



**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Portugal.

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Great country.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, it is. It's a wonderful country. Everybody who visits there just comes back with raving reviews about how they want to go back.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Weren't you the first Portuguese woman to be elected?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I was the first Portuguese woman to be elected to the Ontario Legislature. That is correct, yes.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Thank you.

If I could actually talk to that at this point, because—

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** First Portuguese woman elected to government.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** We know that another member, the member from Davenport, is the first Portuguese woman to be elected to government, because she mentioned that in one of her debates. So congratulations to her, too.

But under this program nomination act, the Ontario Immigration Act, they're going to zero in on economic class, immigrants coming to Ontario who are going to fill job positions—which is great: they want high-skilled workers. So I'm going to speak from my perspective. When my father came to Canada and Ontario, and my uncles and all kinds of relatives, they didn't have any skills. They were labourers, they were farmers, back in their country. Things were a little different then. They came to Ontario, and thank goodness that was allowed, because you guys wouldn't have me here today if that wasn't the case.

Despite the fact that they didn't have any high skills to fill the labour market that they're going to be doing research and developing programs for—and that is certainly something we need to do—they had a role to fill in this province. They contributed to the workforce and they actually helped build Ontario, specifically in the construction trade that my family was able to enter. So if it wasn't for that opportunity for immigrants who came here without skills, they couldn't have helped contribute to the economy.

And they thrived. My father bought a home. He bought a car. He contributed back to society. We brought five over. My youngest brother was born here. He raised six kids here. We're all here. We have children. We're all working and contributing. So that's something, Speaker, that they're talking about, this bill, the provincial nominee program, as looking at economic class drivers for nominating people coming to Ontario. I think there should be some room in here for people who come here who perhaps don't have those skills that they're looking for but can contribute in other ways.

Back to home care: We know that Ontarians are already confronting wait-lists for home care, bed shortages in our long-term-care facilities. The federal government claimed that noticeable decreases in the number of appli-

cants were due to higher proportions of the applications returned as incomplete. That's what they're saying about the caregiver applications limit that they changed, too.

On Friday, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said he "doesn't want to create a permanent underclass in Canada because of problems with the temporary foreign worker program." Yet it was his government that increased the cost of applications to the program. Previously the application cost was just \$275. The new cost is \$1,000, along with the labour market study. Now accessibility is becoming an issue when you raise that application fee that much.

1010

Harper seems adept at posturing on the case of the Filipino immigration while he's actively seeking new trade deals with their country's leaders, all of which will result in increased demand for government and private home care services and, ultimately, caregivers.

Yet this government has been silent on the cuts to the caregiver programs. There is no evidence that advocacy of any kind has taken place to protect either the caregivers or those Ontarians who are in need of their services. This Liberal government needs to accept the consequences for their part in creating and establishing a permanent group of second-class citizens. If they don't react now, it's just going to keep growing.

Speaker, we talked about the Auditor General's report and how there's a fluctuation of staff in and out of the door, how there are people on contract. The ministry's own staff are facing precarious employment.

From the article I read last week, precarious employment is on the rise. It was in our legislative clippings.

The article goes on to say, "Precarious employment is here to stay, a new study shows, and Toronto's new economic reality impacts everyone from the working poor to the middle class."

"The research confirms United Way and McMaster University's groundbreaking 2013 findings that fewer than half of workers in the GTA and Hamilton are in permanent, full-time jobs." That's pretty surprising.

"Instead, about 52% of workers are in temporary, contract or part-time positions."

**Miss Monique Taylor:** Precarious.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes, precarious, and we talked about precarious work here on this side of the House. It doesn't help to stabilize our economy.

"All the indicators suggest that this is the trend of the new labour market," said Wayne Lewchuk, the report's lead researcher.

"This is the new form of employment."

Personally, I was moved by this one particular story: "Diana Mavunduse, 41, who spent most of the past seven years knitting together various part-time and contract jobs to make ends meet, admits she hasn't even thought about starting a family."

"Back home, I would be married already with children," she says of life in her native Zimbabwe."

Diana goes on to talk about the immigrant experience in Ontario: "'A lot of them are doctors and engineers who come with their families,' she says. 'They study for

years for a career, but end up coming here and getting a (menial) job. They end up focusing on their children.’

“As a result, the pressure on families is immense...”

In Diana’s case, that’s what happened, Speaker. They’re trying to survive every day, and they can’t find permanent work.

“The report, entitled The Precarity Penalty, warns that without such action, precarious work will ‘not only affect the ability of people to build stable and fulfilling lives, but it will threaten our region’s capacity to develop a competitive workforce.’”

In short, this story successfully reminds us that a poorly implemented immigration policy can be devastating to people who are caught up in this credentials issue. They come to Ontario, or Canada at large, with degrees and they can’t find work in their professions.

The degree to which we can successfully integrate new arrivals into Ontario’s labour market and social fabric does have a significant effect on our own fiscal fortunes. Immigration has always been the lifeblood of Canada, stretching back into our past, when we recruited immigrants to help populate this country.

It’s a reality that we need to have people come to Ontario, for many reasons: population reasons, economic reasons. We just need the numbers. As I mentioned before, our demographics don’t show that that’s going to be the case for us in 2025.

Our immigration history is rife with examples as well. I’m going to talk about this particular area, because it’s about immigration. It’s not something we should be proud of, of course, but it needs to be said, being the citizenship and immigration critic. Our Canadian history is rife with examples—there are some dark periods where we got it wrong. In the 19th century, we implemented the highly racist Chinese head tax, to discourage Asians from gaining citizenship, just as we discouraged Jews from entering Canada between World War I and World War II. I reference these rather painful examples from our past in order to demonstrate the need for sound legislation.

The Ontario Immigration Act is specifically designed to increase class of economic immigrants. At the same time, the profile of immigrants to Ontario has changed. The percentage of economic-class immigrants coming to Ontario has dropped by nearly 20%, from 64% in 2001 to 52% in 2011. This figure is the lowest in the country. On average, 71% of immigrants arriving to provinces outside of Ontario were economic—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I’ll have to cut you off at this point. It is 10:15. We’ll continue again when you get the floor.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** This House stands recessed until 10:30 this morning.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I’d like to welcome members of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada to Queen’s Park for

World MS Day: Lisa McCoy, Abidah Shamji, Andrea Strath, Joanne Ticknor, Andrea Butcher-Milne, Gregory Bourne, Stella Rose, James Jackson, Marni Wolfe, and John Duffy. Welcome.

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** I hope everyone will join me in welcoming a group of girls who have travelled here this morning from Waterloo, My Girls Government group—first time on the GO train, first time on the TTC. From Lester B. Pearson Public School: Claudia Heeney, Maria Faroga, Faiza Haque, Erika Schneider, Ally Horne, Jessica Martin, Sapna Tripathi, Abigail Persaud, their teacher Laura Teskey, and parent volunteer Chris Martin.

From St. Luke Catholic Elementary School: Maddie Swart, Nicole Posluszny, Tamara McMahon, Tabatha Obermeyer, Natalia Benavides, Alexis Armstrong, Rachel Williams, Jenna Langelaan, and their vice-principal Carla Santomero. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It gives me great pleasure to welcome Leslie Pringle to the Legislature today. She is the mother of Jesse Wright, my legislative assistant. Welcome to the Legislature.

**Mr. Monte McNaughton:** I’d like to welcome back to the Legislature Jeff Koller from ISCA.

**Hon. Jeff Leal:** I’m very pleased to introduce the following people from the Beef Farmers of Ontario—and I welcome members to join the BFO barbecue lunch at Queen’s Park’s lobby today between noon and 2.

I’d like to introduce Bob Gordanier, who is the BFO president; Matt Bowman, Beef Farmers of Ontario vice-president; Dave Stewart, executive director of Beef Farmers of Ontario; and Garnet Toms, who is the director of Beef Farmers of Ontario for the wonderful riding of Peterborough.

Just to let everybody know, the menu includes some of the best Ontario corn-fed beef tenderloin, smoked on-site, served on a bun with side salads.

**Ms. Lisa MacLeod:** It’s a great day today to be from Nepean—Carleton because it’s our day to have the page captain. I’d like to congratulate Brady Sterling, and of course, we all know that his grandfather is former MPP Norm Sterling, and of course often in the gallery is his grandmother Joan Sterling. Let’s give him a really big round of applause.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I just wanted to introduce Heather Shand, a wonderful volunteer from the riding of Parkdale—High Park.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** It’s my pleasure to welcome members of the College Student Alliance visiting Queen’s Park. They’re represented by Matt Caron, Shannon Pollard and John Horrox. Please join me in welcoming them.

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I’m pleased to welcome Kelly and Michael Gibney from York—Simcoe, who are here today as part of the Canadian PKU and allied disorders group for advocacy day. Welcome to all of you who are there on a very important mission.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It’s my pleasure to welcome a fairly large contingent of CUPE members who work in our education sector.



**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** It's my pleasure to welcome, in the west gallery, a group from Primerica Canada. They're at Queen's Park today providing information about their services: John Adams, Hande Bilhan, Rosie Orlando, Bobby Gocool, my resident from Etobicoke—Lakeshore Lincoln Nadarajah, Darren Stephenson, David Grad, Roy House, Franco Delilo and Daniel Pirillo. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I want to welcome Arden Schneckeburger from my riding. He's here with the Beef Farmers of Ontario, and it's great to see them this morning.

**Ms. France Gélinas:** It's my pleasure to introduce Norma Beauchamp, president and CEO of Cystic Fibrosis Canada. She is there with her chief scientific officer, Dr. John Wallenburg, Chris MacLeod, as well as Anchalee Srisombun. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It gives me great pleasure this morning to introduce to the Legislature, in the members' gallery, the participants in my Girls Government mentorship program from Rawlinson public school in my riding of Davenport. With us we have Ryann Hoxsey-Pilon, Sana Khan, Alyssa Diseko, Cheyenne Williams and teacher Emily Praamsma. Welcome, ladies.

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Please join me in welcoming, from Dufferin—Caledon, Frances and Helen Goodfellow, and Jim MacKenzie, who actually worked at Queen's Park during the Davis era. They're here to advocate on behalf of PKU and allied diseases.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I would like to welcome the Beef Farmers of Ontario here today. I met with their vice-president, Matt Bowman, who is from my riding. I'd like to invite you all to the barbeque this afternoon.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'd like Queen's Park to give a warm welcome to Jane Bullbrook from Oakville, from a wonderful organization that helps a lot of people called Unshippable.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** I'd like to introduce Rob Lipsett, a great farmer from Bruce—Grey—Owen Sound and a director with the Beef Farmers of Ontario. Again, I'd welcome everyone to lunch out on the grounds.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I'd like to welcome, from the capital city of Ontario, former Toronto city councillor John Adams, who has also done some great work in newborn screening and on sickle-cell anemia. Welcome, John Adams.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** As I mentioned earlier this week, Ottawa—Orléans is proud to welcome Robert Heckbert, our page in the Legislature. I would like to re-welcome his mother, Susan Bellamy, who is here in the gallery again today.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** I would like to welcome Maryll Alcala-Hao, a co-op student from St. Stephen secondary school. She currently works in my office as a co-op student.

I would also like to welcome Justin MacLean, who is a member of the staff in my office.

Welcome.

**Hon. Mitzie Hunter:** I'm pleased to introduce Gregory Bourne, from my riding of Scarborough—Guildwood, and Abidah Shamji. Both are visiting Queen's Park today with the MS Society for World MS Day.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It's a great pleasure for me to introduce Jim MacKenzie, a great political operative in the Bill Davis and Brian Mulroney years. He's here with the Canadian PKU group, along with John Adams, who is the president and a former councillor, and John Adams's son, who is a PKU patient, John Adams Jr.

We also have with us Nicole Pallone, who is a vice-president of CanPKU; Tatiana Dociu, founder of CanPKU, and her son and a PKU patient, Radu Dociu.

We have Cristian Baigorria, who is the former chair and a founder of CanPKU, and his wife Paola and daughter Cande; and also Dr. Bill Hanley, the first doctor to treat PKU patients in Toronto.

We also have Mary Louise Sukman and Frances Grove.

Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's my pleasure to welcome today my friends and supporters Anne Groulx and Cheryl MacInnes in the east members' gallery. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'd also like to welcome a number of representatives from the Johnson and Johnson family of companies who are back at Queen's Park today. They're in the gallery with us. Welcome to question period.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** On behalf of the member from Toronto—Danforth, I want to introduce the page captain today, Madeleine Randmaa; her mother, JoAnn Purcell; her father, Ric Randmaa; and brother Luc Randmaa, a former page. They're in the members' gallery this morning.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It's my pleasure to welcome students from Don Mills Collegiate to the Legislature today.

## WEARING OF CARNATIONS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton on a point of order.

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent for members to wear carnations in recognition of World MS Day.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Halton is seeking unanimous consent to wear carnations. Do we agree? Agreed.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The leader of the third party on a point of order.

1040

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to have speedy hearing and third reading passage for Bill 77, the Affirming Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Act, by June 4, 2015.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The leader of the third party is seeking unanimous consent to declare third reading on Bill 77. Do we agree? I heard a no.

It is now time for question period.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. In the case of the teachers' strikes in Peel, Durham and Sudbury, the fact that 72,000 high school students were severely impacted had absolutely no effect on this government. Settlement talks were sporadic at best and the education minister seemed thoroughly confused. The reality is these students are back in class today because of the Ontario Labour Relations Board decision, not because of any positive action taken by this government. Now 800,000 elementary students are going to be held hostage unless this government gets serious about reaching a settlement.

Premier, is 800,000 a big enough number for you to finally get serious about doing your job and negotiating a settlement with the elementary school teachers?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I want to say how pleased I am this morning that the students in Durham, Rainbow and Peel are back in school today. I want to thank the Labour Relations Board for pointing out what we've said all along, which is that central strikes need to be about central issues, and local strikes, which are what these were, should be about local issues. The Labour Relations Board confirmed what I've said all along, that this was, in fact, an unlawful strike in the sense that it was local but based on central issues.

I do want to thank the Labour Relations Board for their ruling, because had it not been for the OLRB ruling—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary? The member from Simcoe North.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** This question is to the Premier as well. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario will ramp up their work-to-rule job action on June 1. Teachers will no longer make themselves available to meet with parents to discuss students' transitions to the next grade. Field trips for the next school year will not be booked. Teachers will not participate in professional development activities.

Premier, you've been preaching to us in this House for weeks about your commitment to negotiated settlements, but now we hear that you're not even at the table with the Elementary Teachers' Federation trying to negotiate a settlement.

Premier, where is your sense of urgency? When are you going to get back to the negotiating table and end the chaos you've created in Ontario's education system?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think this issue of a sense of urgency is really important because we had a sense of

urgency that we needed to go to the Education Relations Commission, get the ruling that the school year was in jeopardy and table back-to-work legislation. The kids could have been back in school even earlier in the week had it not been for the NDP blocking the legislation.

I would like to thank the three school boards that got the cease-and-desist order very late in the day yesterday—I would like to thank the three school boards for working very hard yesterday evening to make sure that the school boards actually do have students back in the classroom today. So thank you to the boards for that hard work.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Speaker, you know she hasn't answered either one of the questions.

Back to the Premier: The job action announced by the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario will have an immediate impact on students. Special-needs students will suffer because teachers will no longer make themselves available to talk about students' transitions to the next grade. Field trips for the next school year won't be booked.

Premier, your education minister has had over a year to negotiate collective agreements with all of these unions. In that time, she has made absolutely no progress and it is the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Two different conversations are going on, other than the person putting the question, including members from that side as well. It stops.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Whoever said that is close to getting turfed too. I'm standing.

Please carry on.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Premier, it is the students and their parents who are suffering. You've got three months left until the beginning of September when the kids go back to school. We know we have chaos now. Premier, will you fire this education minister and put someone competent in there who can get the job done and end the anxiety for Ontario's parents and students?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** As the member just pointed out, we have three months left to negotiate with ETFO, and we will do that. But we only have 10 days left to make sure that, now that the students are back in class, they stay in class. That's why we need to go ahead and pass our Protecting the School Year Act, to make sure that those students who are back in class today stay in class for the rest of the school year. That is exactly what we intend to do: to make sure, as our top priority, that we get our legislation passed so that the kids who have gone back today can stay there and benefit from teaching for the next month, get their school year completed, and



graduate, for those who are in grade 12. That is our priority.

### HYDRO ONE

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: When the Ombudsman released his report on the billing practices of Hydro One, the findings were astonishing and astounding, to say the least. Mistreatment, abuse, deceit and deception: just a few of the words that describe Hydro One's business practice as outlined in the Ombudsman's report.

For now, Hydro One is a crown corporation for which the Minister of Energy is ultimately responsible. It appears no one was held accountable for the findings of the Ombudsman's report.

Premier, will you hold the minister responsible? Will you fire your Minister of Energy for his complete incompetence on this file, apologize to the tens of thousands of Ontario Hydro One customers who were misled, apologize to the officers of this House who were deceived and lied to, and put a new minister in place that we can have confidence in?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please.

The member from Hamilton Mountain needs to be reminded: You're even a little closer now, and I can hear you. With that, I will also ask the deputy House leader, when I'm standing, to stop. I'm going to put in the new rule that I've been working with, that if I'm standing and you want to chirp, you're gone.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank the Ombudsman for his report and for his recommendations. We've acknowledged that during the transition to the new billing system there was an unacceptable number of mistakes, that there were too many customers who experienced service issues. In fact, the CEO of Hydro One has apologized to all customers.

Prior to the review by the Ombudsman, Hydro One had begun to make changes, so there was already an acknowledgement that there was a problem, and there were changes put in place. Having said that, we're pleased that the Ombudsman has done the review and there are more recommendations that have come forward.

But, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Leader of the Opposition is aware of the fact that, as we talk about broadening the ownership of Hydro One, one of the things that needs to happen is that it needs to be a better-run company. I think this latest incident makes that very clear.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: I don't think selling Hydro One is going to give you the oversight and the accountability that you should be exercising today. In fact, you'll lose majority control and you'll lose oversight—no more Ombudsman, no more freedom of information. And we won't even know,

because you won't put this before the parliamentary budget office or the auditor prior to signing the deals with your new private sector partners, whether or not we're getting a good deal for the people of Ontario, who own that company that you're giving away in a fire sale. Shame on you.

When are you going to have somebody take responsibility for the billing errors at Hydro One, for the months and months that they deceived the officers of this Legislature, that they deceived the members of this Legislature and impeded our ability to serve our constituents properly because we didn't have honest and direct information? No one seems to ever take responsibility in your government. No one at Hydro One has been dismissed.

I ask you again today: At least dismiss the minister. Show that you care about—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Start the clock.

Premier?

1050

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I am so pleased that the Leader of the Opposition raised the issue of a fire sale, because it was the fire sale of the 407 that was the backdrop against which we made our decision vis-à-vis our assets.

The fact is that the 407 sell-off, which retained no ongoing—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** The difference is choice and not.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Oh, that was so close—and I don't say that with a smile.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well we are retaining 40% ownership of Hydro One. He knows that the regulatory controls that are in place now are going to continue to be in place. He knows that the setting of prices—the process that is in place now will continue to be in place. He knows that we will have control over the appointment of the CEOs.

I think that the Leader of the Opposition needs to understand that the way the 407 was sold off, with no ongoing revenue to the people of Ontario, with no control over that road and an undervaluation of that asset—that's the backdrop against which we made decisions, and we did it differently.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary? The member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** You know, when the Liberals are in a mess, they dodge, deflect and deny. That's their modus operandi. But they've failed to answer the question and failed to be accountable to the people of Ontario.

Back to the Premier: On December 17, 2013, the Minister of Energy's office wrote to the Hydro One

CEO, asking about the absurdly high number of complaints about Hydro One service. The CEO responded that everything was good, and the level of complaints was nothing to be concerned about. He told the Minister of Energy's office that, despite senior officials at Hydro One referring to the organization as being in "crisis mode" over the level of complaints.

Premier, has the CEO of Hydro One been held accountable for lying to the minister's office?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** We know that Hydro One has been working hard to resolve outstanding issues, and Hydro One has outlined that work in detail. However, further work and remediation is still clearly required, and that's why I've asked the chair of Hydro One, David Denison, to report back to me within 40 days with a detailed action plan describing how Hydro One can further address the recommendations in the Ombudsman's report.

But what we need to say is that this government has provided more additional oversight than any other government in the history of this province. We created the position of Financial Accountability Officer, made the French Language Services Commissioner independent, put into place a Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, allocated new powers to the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, and expanded the Ombudsman's role to include oversight of municipalities, school boards and publicly funded universities—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. On Tuesday, the Minister of Education stood in her place and said, "The act that we will be introducing this afternoon is obviously designed to get kids back into the classroom. We want the kids back in the classroom as quickly as possible."

Well, kids are back in the classroom. Why is the Premier stopping a strike that isn't even happening when, instead, she should be stopping the chaos in the schools?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Yes, the kids are back in the classroom. They could have been back in the classroom two days ago if it hadn't been for the NDP.

The fact is that it's very important that we make sure those students stay in the classroom until the end of the year, as the Minister of Education has outlined. There's no guarantee that that would be the case, so we need to continue to work to put the legislation in place so that there will be a guarantee that the students in those three boards, in Rainbow, in Durham and in—what's the third one?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Peel.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Peel—and Peel, that they are in school for the duration of the school year.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On Tuesday, the Premier said, "We want those kids back in school. We want the collective bargaining process to continue."

In 2013, the Premier said her style is "collaborative, which is leading from within a team, bringing people to the table."

In 2014, she wrote to her labour minister and told him to "uphold and respect the collective bargaining process" and "maintain a respectful labour relations climate."

The strike is over, Speaker. The kids are back in school. It's time for this Premier to keep her word. Respect the process. Bring the people to the table and get an agreement with the teachers.

Will this Premier stop making things worse by continuing with Bill 103 and, instead, end the chaos by spending the next little while at the negotiating table trying to get a collective agreement?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** Are you too occupied with—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex is inches away. I'd like an acknowledgement from the member from Essex that I spoke to him. Thank you.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think we actually need to look at the ruling from the OLRB. What the OLRB has said is, "I direct that these strikes cease at least two weeks from the date of this decision." In other words, the strikes can resume with different signs on June 10.

Now, if the leader of the NDP would actually read the legislation, she would discover that the legislation not only brings people back to school, it keeps them there for the rest of the year. There will be no more strikes in Durham, no more strikes in Peel and no more strikes in Rainbow for the rest of the year. We need to pass the legislation so that kids stay in school.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** I find it amazing that the Liberal government takes no responsibility whatsoever for the chaos that's happening in our schools. It's because they're refusing to bargain at the bargaining table that we're in this mess in the first place. They lost kids six weeks of their education because they are not being serious in terms of their obligation to bargain.

But you know what? Apparently, the Premier doesn't have any confidence in her minister to get a deal, which is why she's using her majority to stop a strike that isn't even happening. The only way we can get stability is with a deal. But instead of bringing people together, the Liberals are driving the sides further apart and inflaming an already very bad situation.

Will this Premier pull her bill and focus on getting an agreement that will end the uncertainty and the chaos in our education system?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I find it quite appalling that the leader of the party opposite, first of all, wanted to maintain and continue what has turned out to be an unlawful



strike. Now she doesn't want to make sure that the strike doesn't resume in two weeks. We want to keep the kids in the strike—keep the kids out of—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

Please finish.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** It's also important to note that the legislation before the House actually sets up a scheme to continue negotiations, to have mediation, and if either negotiations or mediations are successful—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Wrap-up sentence, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The bill actually does ensure that negotiations, mediation and, if necessary, arbitration take place and that's exactly what—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question?

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier. On October 20, the Premier stood in her place and said that Ed Clark said "quite clearly that he doesn't believe that selling those assets is the right answer. He has said that.

"I believe that the leader of the third party is probably having a bit of a hard time framing the question because in fact Ed Clark had said he agrees that selling those assets is not the right thing to do."

1100

Six months later, here we are, Speaker, and the Premier is selling off Hydro One. How can the Premier say people knew what her plan was—because she keeps saying that; everybody knew what her plan was, apparently. But not only did she not run on that plan, but she spent months after the election denying that plan. Even Ed Clark had no plan to do this a couple of months ago. Where is the Premier coming from?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton—Lawrence, come to order.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me once again go through what we are proposing to do and what was in Ed Clark's final report, which is that we need—

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** No, we're talking about the interim report.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know you're talking about the interim report, but there was a final report, and the recommendations in the final report are the recommendations that we are going to implement, which means that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would ask that the leader of the third party listen to the answer of the question that you put.

Carry on.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** In order to be able to make the investments in infrastructure, in transportation

infrastructure, roads, bridges and transit, in order to be able to do that—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew, come to order—second time.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** In order to be able to make those investments, we are broadening the ownership of Hydro One. We are retaining 40% ownership, Mr. Speaker. No individual or entity will be able to own more than 10%. The regulatory controls and price controls will remain in place. The ability of the government to determine where a line will be built will remain in place.

Those controls were very important to us, as well as the retention of—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** On October 27, the Minister of Finance said, "We have made it clear that we are not going to sell off our assets." Here we are, six months later, and the Premier is selling off Hydro One.

One of these things is not like the other. It seems not only did the Premier keep Ontarians in the dark about her plan to sell off Hydro One, but she kept her Minister of Finance in the dark as well. How can the Premier say people actually knew about her plan when, as of October 27, even her own Minister of Finance had no idea?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, we said that we were going to review the assets owned by the people of Ontario in order to be able to invest in the new—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Come on. Release Charles from the root cellar. Release him from that root cellar and let him have some light.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke is warned.

Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** —in order to be able to invest in the assets and the infrastructure that are needed for the 21st century. That's what we ran on. That's what we said we were going to do. We said we were going to ask Ed Clark to give us advice. He did that, and those recommendations are the recommendations that we're going to invest in, that we're going to implement.

I would ask the leader of the third party which projects that we are implementing she would cancel. Would she cancel the Hamilton LRT? Would she cancel the expansion of Highway 7 to Kitchener-Waterloo? Would she cancel the Eglinton Crosstown? Would she cancel—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** In October of last year, the Premier stood here and I stood here, and the Premier said to me, "It must actually be very hard for the leader of the third party to ask these questions. She knows that we're not selling off the assets. She knows perfectly well that that was one of the parameters as Ed Clark went into this review. She knows that we are keeping these assets in public hands."

Well, here we are. Here we are. The Premier is selling Hydro One. But six months ago, she looked at me in this

chamber—she looked me in the eye and she said that she was not selling off our assets.

How can the Premier of this province say that she has been upfront with Ontarians, let alone this Legislature, when six short months ago she insisted that Hydro One was not going to be sold?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I would say to the leader of the third party today that it must be equally hard for her to ask questions that she knows perfectly well undermine a plan to invest in the people of this province, to invest in the infrastructure of this province, to invest in the transit in her own hometown, Mr. Speaker. She has no plan to do that. She has no way that she can look the people of Ontario in the face and say, “This is how I would do it,” because she has no plan to make those investments, Mr. Speaker, and apparently—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I’m standing. Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Apparently, she thinks it’s just fine to step back and say, “We don’t need to make investments in infrastructure. We don’t need to build the roads and the bridges and the transit”—in her own hometown—“that are so vitally necessary for the future economic health of this province.” She thinks that’s fine. We don’t. We have a plan to build that infrastructure, and we’re going—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East–Stoney Creek, second time.

## HYDRO ONE

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question. The member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I’m glad I’m still here.

To the Premier: The Ombudsman’s report said that they learned from internal emails that Hydro One deliberately sanitized the script it used at that meeting with the Ombudsman. A Hydro One official wrote in an email, “If we simply state that we’re essentially in line with expected customer reaction ... that’s a healthy story.” That official was deliberately misleading an independent officer of the Legislature. They tried to hide the truth.

Premier, has the Hydro One official been fired for misleading and obstructing the Ombudsman?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Mr. Speaker, we know that the Ombudsman did a very comprehensive and thorough study of this particular issue. We have accepted his report. We’re also proceeding on the basis of having asked the current chair of Hydro One, David Denison, to follow up on the Ombudsman’s report, to report back

publicly within 40 days, looking into all of the recommendations as well as any other relevant matters around the billing issue. We will have a thorough report from the current chair. We will assess the situation at that particular time.

There were three senior officers of the corporation who were associated with the IT system who are no longer with the corporation. They left the corporation around the time that the extent of the billing errors came to light.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Again to the Premier: The Ombudsman’s office called Hydro One to ask about a billing issue. When that conversation ended, the employee emailed their manager. The manager replied, “If you get the feeling that they’re going to investigate more aggressively or escalate, let us know,” and “Good warning in case they come knocking. Please keep holding the line with messages like you conveyed.” It is obvious that the manager knew something wasn’t right and instructed their staff to at the very least bend the truth or perhaps outright lie.

Premier, has that manager been fired for instructing their staff to mislead the Ombudsman?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I’ll just repeat what I said—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I’ll just repeat what I said in the main question.

It’s very clear that Hydro One has been working to address the outstanding issues, but we’re going further than that. We want to make it perfectly clear that we’re going to be receiving a report from the new chair of Hydro One. The newly appointed chair of Hydro One, David Denison, is overseeing a process to select a CEO moving forward, Mr. Speaker. The chair and the Minister of Energy are in the process of restructuring the board of directors. It’s going to be a better company. It’s going to be a more efficient company. It will be a very accountable company.

## TEACHERS’ LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the education Premier. The Liberal government’s—

*Interjections.*

1110

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock.

I’m going to offer some advice, and that is: Just the title. Just as we’ve done before. And it’ll stay that way. That’s the last time it’s said.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier: The Liberal government’s chronic underfunding of education in our province has left our schools in chaos. The Minister of Education actually boasts about the fact that she cut \$250 million from education over 2014—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It goes both ways. Finish, please.



**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** The Minister of Education actually boasts about the fact that she cut \$250 million from education over 2014-15. The minister boasts about the fact that her government has closed 88 good neighbourhood schools. The minister is proud of her record of cutting \$7 million from the Geographic Circumstances Grant which supports small, rural and isolated boards. All of this, and the minister is perplexed about the unrest in the education sector.

The minister was given a simple task—get a deal with the teachers—and she failed. Speaker, will the Premier fire the Minister of Education immediately?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I think maybe we should start by reminding the members opposite about the plan that they ran on for education and health. The plan they ran on for education and health said that they'd start with the budget that we had last year and then they would take out \$600 million from the budget we had. It would seem to me that might have been about \$250 million out of education and about \$350 million out of health, because health has the bigger budget. So, in fact, their platform was to take \$250 million out of the education budget beyond the \$22.5 billion that we started with. So I'm quite surprised that this is somehow now a problem, because a year ago that's what—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Be seated.

Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Back to the Premier: The Minister of Education has been sitting on the sidelines not taking this seriously for weeks. The minister has been playing the blame game, desperately trying to skirt responsibility for the mess that her government has made of education. The minister has insulted families and students by saying, "I had protests outside my office before the last election and I seem to have gotten re-elected."

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Trinity-Spadina, second time.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's obvious she's more interested in playing political games than getting a deal. The minister was responsible for getting a deal with teachers, and she has failed, leaving parents and families to pay the price. We have members of CUPE here from the education sector, and she's not taking bargaining with them seriously either. They've been waiting since June.

Speaker, will the Premier take responsibility for this mess and fire the Minister of Education?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** My question, actually, is, when are the NDP going to stop blocking the legislation that enables us to make sure that now that the students are back in their classes in Durham, in Peel, in Rainbow, they'll stay there? Because the OLRB ruling did issue a cease-and-desist and got the kids back into class, but it doesn't keep them there. It says a strike can restart on June 10. We need to pass the legislation quickly that will ensure that the—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Essex, second time.

Wrap-up sentence.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** The legislation that is before the House will ensure that students stay in their classes in those three boards for the rest of the school year.

## PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** My question is to the minister responsible for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. On May 30, in just three days, the Pan Am torch will be arriving in Toronto where it will begin its 41-day journey. I was excited to learn that on June 2, as one of its first stops, the torch will be arriving in my riding of Sudbury. I know many of my constituents are getting excited to welcome the torch and the Pan Am spirit to Sudbury, and there will be a celebration in Bell Park.

After it leaves Sudbury, the torch will begin the journey across beautiful northern Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. That's enough. The comments I'm hearing are just way over the top. It's not the place for this.

Finish, please.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It will make stops in Thessalon, Blind River and North Bay, just to name a few of those beautiful places. From the north, the torch will travel around the province until it reaches the opening ceremonies on July 7.

Speaker, through you to the minister: Minister, can you tell us about the torch relay and the journey the Pan Am flame will make across our great province of Ontario?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain—second time.

Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, responsible for the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'd like to thank the member for the question.

I'm so excited to know that the flame is going to arrive here in Ontario this week. There have been so many people involved in the planning of these games, and I think the arrival of the torch really captures the momentum we're building here in Ontario.

As the member mentioned, the torch will arrive in Toronto on Saturday, and it will travel to northern Ontario this Sunday, landing in the beautiful city of Thunder Bay.

We wanted to make sure that everyone in this province has an opportunity to participate in these games, and that's why we made sure that there would be 130 stops throughout the province, and then the opening ceremonies will take place on July 10.

I encourage all members of this Legislature to join in the celebration and to participate at these 130 locations. I'll give some more information in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** Thank you, Minister, and thank you, Speaker. Torchbearers include Canadian icons such as Chris Hadfield, Alex Bilodeau and Simon Whitfield. They're among the over 3,000 torchbearers who will be carrying the torch during the relay. Citizens from all walks of life will get to be part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and it's great that so many people will get to participate. And let's not forget that people from around the province will come out to witness this incredible event happening in over 100 communities.

I know that all communities are planning unique cultural and sporting events to celebrate their connection to the games. Can the minister tell the members of this House about how our government is supporting communities in their efforts to celebrate the games?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** Again, I'd like to thank the member for the question.

I'm happy to tell the members of this House about a great program that I had the opportunity to announce in Milton. Our government has developed the torch relay community grant to support the arrival of the Pan Am/Parapan Am flame in local communities. The torch relay community grant is part of Ontario's \$40-million strategy to ensure everyone in this province has the opportunity to benefit from these games. Funding is being made available to municipalities and band councils undertaking a torch relay community stop or celebration, or communities hosting an official torch relay event.

This is about supporting diversity. It's about supporting inclusion and accessibility and activities that will build on the excitement of these games, as well as ensuring that many Ontarians get to participate in these incredible games that are coming to Ontario.

#### WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Good morning, Speaker. My question is for the Premier.

On January 2, 2012, 18-year-old Torry McIntyre-Courville phoned her mom to tell her she loved her and that she'd be home. The next day, Torry and three teenaged friends were all killed in a horrific crash in Parry Sound.

It appears that the roads were not safe for travel, and it took the Auditor General to tell us why: In 2009, to save \$36 million, winter road maintenance was drastically reduced, but the public was never told.

Ministry officials were not only aware of this—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Deputy House leader—second time.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** —but they complained to senior levels.

Premier, you took over as transport minister in 2010. What did you know about this major reduction—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The deputy House leader is warned.

Finish, please.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** You took over as transport minister in 2010. What did you know about this major reduction in safety, and what did you do about it?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I thank the member from Nipissing for this question. I've had the opportunity to say a number of times here in the Legislature that, as Minister of Transportation, whenever I hear of an injury or a fatality on any of Ontario's highways throughout any season over the course of the year, of course I offer my heartfelt condolences and I feel deep sympathy for the family and friends of those that have been impacted.

1120

The auditor did come forward with her report. There were eight recommendations contained in her report. The Ministry of Transportation has accepted all eight of those recommendations. And I gladly accept the responsibility for making sure that, going forward, we continue to improve this program so that it provides the people of every corner of this province with the kind of highway maintenance that they expect and deserve.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Premier, not only were those four teenagers killed, there were 10 deaths within eight days, all kids under the age of 20. In fact, one was eight years old.

You changed the winter maintenance rules and didn't tell anybody about it. You cut back on winter maintenance to save money. You put people's lives at risk, and for five years you and your government said that that never happened. Everyone up north kept saying, "Something is different. Something is not right with our roads." It took the Auditor General to come out and tell us the truth.

I first called for a coroner's inquest in 2012. Premier, will you finally do the right thing and ask the coroner to hold an inquest into these terrible deaths?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Thanks again, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the follow-up question.

Before the auditor was asked to go in and conduct her review, back in 2013 the Ministry of Transportation did conduct its own internal review of the winter maintenance program. As a result of that internal review, 105 pieces of additional equipment have been deployed both in southern Ontario and also northern Ontario—specifically in the north for truck climbing and passing lanes. In addition, more inspectors were brought to bear in every region of this province to help us with oversight.

The other aspect of the auditor's report that the member opposite doesn't reference is that she acknowledges that the ministry's moves with respect to improving this program deserve some recognition. In addition to that, it's also important to point out that over the last 13 years, the province of Ontario has consistently ranked first or



second in North America for highway safety, and we will continue to work on this program going forward.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question to the Premier: Can the Premier tell Ontarians whether there will be any review of selling off Hydro One to foreign owners?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** We've been talking about the review of a number of assets. Actually, we've been talking about this review since April 2014, when we brought forward the most progressive budget in Ontario's history, which was denied by the opposition, who didn't even show up for lock-up. In it, we discussed a number of initiatives going forward.

We're talking about broad ownership of Hydro One at this stage, recognizing that it's about giving opportunities for our retail and certain institutions. But it's broadly based in Ontario. We'll further discuss it in the months to come.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** So I guess that's a no. The Premier knows that foreign owners can litigate under NAFTA. They can litigate under the WTO. Independent research from the legislative library confirms that any amount of foreign ownership can open the door to litigation, and legal experts confirm that investors have the right to sue the government if the government gets in the way of maximizing their profits. They specifically say, "The balance between the public interest and the rights of foreign investors would be tipped decidedly in favour of" foreign investors.

Why is the Premier handing away control of a strategic asset like Hydro One to foreign investors?

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Hydro One will be one of the biggest companies in Canada. It's going to enable us to have a progressive and growing corporation, housed right here in Ontario, and owned by Ontarians. It's going to enable us to provide an even greater increase in dividends and opportunities for the public, who will be able to have the opportunity to buy into the company.

It is about protecting the public interest as well. We'll continue to do that with the opportunities that will exist, as we do with other major corporations in Canada. We're talking about the first tranche being only 15%. The public and Ontario will still have 85% of the company this year as we proceed forward to assess the dynamics of what will perhaps occur thereafter, all with the intention of protecting the public interest, and more importantly reinvesting the money into infrastructure to earn even greater value for the province and for the people of Ontario.

#### GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** My question is to the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. Recently,

our government announced that Ontario will be working towards a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 37% below 1990 levels by 2030. This ambitious but achievable target keeps our province on track to reach our 2050 target of 80% below 1990 levels.

On April 15, the federal government announced a 2030 greenhouse gas reduction target of 30% below 2005 levels, which is equivalent to only 14% below 1990 levels. This is less than half of Ontario's commitment to fighting climate change. Yesterday, the federal government had some difficulty explaining to a House of Commons committee how much Canada would have to reduce its emissions to reach their 2030 emissions target.

Speaker, through you: Could the minister please tell the House how many megatonnes Ontario will need to reduce its emissions by to reach our 2030 emission targets and how we'll reach that?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** It is challenging right now. All of the weight of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada has fallen on the backs of the provinces to do that. Our coal plant closures, amazing programs in Quebec and British Columbia—provinces have stepped up to actually reduce emissions.

It was disappointing to see that the federal minister couldn't even tell us what the numbers were in their plan—well, they don't have a plan, which is probably why they can't tell us what the numbers are.

Our commitment is consistent with other jurisdictions, which is 37% by 2030. That actually is a 65.5-megatonne reduction, which will be one of the most significant. The introduction of initiatives like our carbon market, working with California and Quebec, are the kinds of hard, practical policies that will actually get us there.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** Thank you, Minister. I'm really pleased to hear that our government is taking the issue of climate change so seriously and has a firm grasp of the reductions we will have to achieve to reach our important greenhouse gas reduction goals.

Many constituents in my riding of Cambridge, North Dumfries and indeed Waterloo region recognize climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, and poses a threat to our infrastructure, food supply, drinking water and economic competitiveness. Increasingly, provinces and states have stepped up to provide leadership where national governments have failed to take meaningful action on one of the most important issues of our time. This is especially clear when we see the federal government announcing a 2030 GHG emissions reduction target which amounts to less than half of what Ontario has committed to.

Speaker, through you: Could the minister inform this House on the ways in which Ontario is working with other jurisdictions to take action on climate change?

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** You can't just pull numbers out of the air. The reason that we chose 37% is because that's what we're tracking to, Mr. Speaker.

I'm very proud to be part of a government, with Premier Wynne, that's actually continuing to meet our

commitments. We met our 2014 target. Our five-year plan said we'd be at 6% by 2014. We know we've met that and may have actually exceeded that. We're now developing our next five-year plan, for 15% by 2020.

These numbers are important because they have to be sufficient to keep us under two degrees Celsius. I was just signing the under-two MOU with Governor Brown and others—progressive governments.

The problem with the federal target of 14% below 1990 levels is it's less than half of what's necessary to keep us under two degrees. So it's really like putting a band-aid on a heart attack: It simply doesn't do the job. The provinces in Canada want to see the government of Canada there in Paris with targets sufficient to keep us under two.

### ONTARIO DRUG BENEFIT PROGRAM

**Mr. Michael Harris:** My question is to the Premier. This morning in the media studio, we heard heart-breaking stories detailing life-changing impacts to the small number of Ontarians suffering from PKU, a rare, inherited brain-damaging disorder that can lead to severe intellectual disability without treatment.

1130

Every province began testing for PKU in the 1960s, but the families of the few hundred who suffer across Ontario are asking why this province is denying access to one of the only medications available. Extreme restrictive criteria you've set out has meant that two years after being cleared for managed access, not a single patient has received publicly funded access.

Premier, do you think it is fair that PKU sufferers are forced to come, cap in hand, like so many before them, to plead to your government for medication that will change and often save their lives?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I greatly appreciate the question from the member opposite. I also appreciate the fact that John Adams and his colleague are here from the association representing those families and individuals who are suffering from PKU, which is an absolutely devastating disease and illness, particularly if it's not detected very early on in life.

That being said, it is a challenging process to determine which drugs to provide public funding for and which not to, and we rely on our clinical experts. We, in fact, have depoliticized the process so that we get the best possible scientific and clinical evidence to determine whether a specific drug is effective or not.

I'm pleased to say that in this interim period, because there is a national process under way to review this drug, through the Exceptional Access Program we do, on a limited basis, provide funding for this drug Kuvan, which is incredibly important in this condition.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Premier, people with rare diseases can't wait. Madi Vanstone couldn't wait, the aHUS

sufferers who were here a month ago can't wait as you make feel-good announcements when they're facing you but continue to force them to jump through hoops for access when they leave the building. It's not right, and you know it.

At the end of question period, I will be asking for unanimous consent to introduce a motion to strike a select committee into funding for rare diseases in Ontario and that the House leaders determine composition of that committee before the end of this calendar year.

Premier, will you join me in doing the right thing? Support the creation of a select committee into funding for rare diseases and end the suffering for those forced to plead with you for life-altering medication.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I'm absolutely certain the member opposite agrees with me that this shouldn't be a process which is politicized. It should be based on the best scientific and clinical evidence possible.

Ontario has asked the national process, the Common Drug Review, to revisit this drug, Kuvan, to actually help us establish the clinical criteria that will allow us to provide it to those individuals who will benefit from it.

I have to say that this drug was reviewed by the Common Drug Review on a national basis. It was not recommended for public funding. Despite that, Ontario and one other jurisdiction—I believe Saskatchewan—went ahead and put it on its Exceptional Access Program.

As I mentioned, we've gone back to the federal process and asked them to review the clinical criteria. In fact, through the conversation I had this morning with the advocates for those suffering from this disease, I will be asking our ministry to review those clinical criteria again.

### LGBT CONVERSION THERAPY

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Conversion therapy has caused far too much pain for far too many Ontarians. It needs to stop, and it needs to stop now. We can do that by passing Bill 77, but the government seems to be stalling. The government House leader has asked for a number of government bills to pass before he calls Bill 77. Many of those bills have already passed. The remainder are scheduled to pass and, still, the government refuses to pass Bill 77. But every day that the Premier forces Bill 77 to sit in limbo is another day that conversion therapy is practised here in the province of Ontario.

Why won't the Premier stop the political games, do the right thing and call Bill 77 to committee and third reading now?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I and this government, this party, fundamentally believe that Ontarians deserve the right to be treated with dignity and respect in support of their human rights and defending those human rights.

The leader of the third party knows this well. In fact, the Premier of this province herself spoke in this Legislature directly in support of the private member's



bill that's coming from the member of Parkdale–High Park. I appreciate—we all appreciate—the work that the member from Parkdale–High Park is doing on this.

It's also important to reference the fact that I have had my ministry working hard on this private member's bill with the member from Parkdale–High Park. She met with them last week to go over the proposed legislation, the bill itself, to make—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Answer?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** —it even stronger so that we can all be proud when it comes to that moment in time when we're able to debate it in the Legislature and pass it, so that conversion therapy is no longer permitted anywhere in this province.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, I'm now even more confused than I was before. Everybody in this Legislature actually supports the bill—

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Everybody in this Legislature supports the bill. The Liberals profess over and over again that they think conversion therapy is wrong and it doesn't belong in the province of Ontario.

We have an opportunity in these next few days to get through that third reading process, to get through the committee process and put those amendments forward that the Minister of Health talks about. Let's get it done. Every day that we wait, another young person is in jeopardy of having their life ruined from conversion therapy.

This is a Liberal majority government. They need to take this on. They need to take it seriously. If the health minister supports this and knows that there are things that need to change, we can get this done by June 4. It's their job to make sure it happens.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** The House leader.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Speaker, it is absolutely shameful and disgraceful for the leader of the third party to put the lives of young LGBT kids in jeopardy, because for the last three weeks, she has been single-handedly obstructing the passage of Bill 77. I have had many conversations with the member from Parkdale–High Park, who shares my view of the obstruction from the leader of the third party.

But not only is she obstructing that bill, she is also obstructing a very good bill from the member from Haldimand–Norfolk, Bill 27, and the member from Ottawa–Orléans, which is Bill 75.

The three House leaders have been working very closely to make sure that we pass very good private members' bills through this Legislature, but the leader of the third party has single-handedly been obstructing the passage of Bill 77. She should be regretful and ashamed about that.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Be seated, please. Start the clock.

New question.

## LA FRANCOPHONIE

**M. Arthur Potts:** Ma question est pour la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones. Comme vous le savez, l'année 2015 marque un jalon très important dans l'histoire de notre province : le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de présence française en Ontario. Plus que jamais, c'est l'occasion de célébrer l'apport significatif des francophones à l'essor de notre province depuis 1615.

Est-ce que la ministre pourrait nous parler de l'investissement de l'Ontario à Penetanguishene dans le cadre de la commémoration des 400 ans de présence française en Ontario?

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Je suis très impressionnée du bon français de mon collègue le député de Beaches–East York.

Notre gouvernement a récemment annoncé un investissement de 1,4 million de dollars afin de réaménager le lieu qui revêt une grande importance pour la francophonie ontarienne et pour l'histoire de l'Ontario, soit le parc de Penetanguishene. En effet, c'est là qu'a eu lieu la rencontre entre Samuel de Champlain et le chef huron-wendat. Quatre cents ans plus tard, nous sommes fiers de participer aux efforts de réaménagement du parc de Penetanguishene.

## 1140

Je remercie le membre de Simcoe–Nord, qui ne m'écoute pas, pour son aide à amener le gouvernement fédéral dans ce projet, pour une contribution égale à la nôtre. Je remercie aussi le maire de Penetanguishene, Gerry Marshall, pour son grand enthousiasme envers ce projet.

**Le Président (L'hon. Dave Levac):** Question supplémentaire?

**M. Arthur Potts:** Merci, madame la Ministre. Vous êtes très gentille et une bonne amie.

J'aimerais remercier la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones pour sa réponse. On voit bien la fierté, l'énergie et l'enthousiasme que dégage la ministre lorsqu'elle parle de ce projet. Je me réjouis aussi de constater à quel point le gouvernement accorde une importance de premier ordre à la reconnaissance de la contribution des Premières Nations et des francophones, deux communautés qui ont contribué—et qui continuent encore—à façonner la province et le pays dans lesquels nous vivons aujourd'hui.

Ma question est encore pour la ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones : Est-ce que la ministre pourrait nous expliquer comment ce projet à Penetanguishene a vu le jour?

**Une voix:** Bonne question.

**L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur:** Oui, bravo. Merci beaucoup. Très bonne.

Alors, il va sans dire qu'un projet d'envergure comme celui-ci a nécessité une collaboration étroite entre

plusieurs acteurs, et ça, tant aux niveaux municipal et provincial que fédéral. Alors, encore une fois, je remercie le député de Simcoe-Nord pour son implication.

Toutefois, je tiens à préciser que le nouveau parc Rotary Champlain-Wendat est né d'abord et avant tout d'une initiative citoyenne. Du coup, je tiens à saluer haut et fort le leadership déterminé de M<sup>me</sup> Anne Gagné et de son frère David Dupuis, sans qui ce projet n'aurait jamais vu le jour. Grâce à leur dévouement inlassable à la cause francophone, nous laissons aujourd'hui un legs aux gens de Penetang mais aussi aux milliers d'Ontariens, de Canadiens et de touristes étrangers qui pourront se rendre à ce magnifique parc et en apprendre davantage sur l'histoire de l'Ontario français, et ça, pour des générations à venir.

### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Todd Smith:** My question this morning is for the minister responsible for the Pan Am Games. Minister, a freedom-of-information request from your ministry states that over \$5 million was spent on production and advertising for the Pan Am "invade" ad. That was in 2014.

We know that you're now airing a lot more ads. You're producing more ads. You're even putting them on during expensive times like during the Stanley Cup playoff game last night.

We also hear that you've hired a famous director—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good choice.

Finish, please.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** We've also heard that you've hired a famous director to film people leaping off the CN Tower for a new ad.

I don't want to hear about the flame. I don't want to hear about the medals. I don't want to hear about Pachi. What I do want to know is, how much have you actually spent to produce and air advertisements for TO2015? How much money?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** It's interesting: On one side of the House, we hear we're not doing enough for advertisement; the other half are saying we're doing too much in advertising.

The one thing I do know, Mr. Speaker, is that there are only days before the torch comes here to Ontario. We have 44 days until we welcome the world to Ontario. And still the Progressive Conservative Party in the province of Ontario are not on board.

In fact, the member opposite would know exactly how much we're spending on advertising if he actually showed up for our technical briefings. We've had five of them so far, and I don't think any member from the Progressive Conservatives showed up. When will the Progressive Conservative Party stand up for the athletes in Ontario, stand up for this province, and join us as we welcome the world here to Ontario?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm waiting for the person beside you to sit down so I can identify you.

The member from Leeds–Grenville on a point of order.

### VISITORS

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'd like to introduce my Girls Government group that is in the gallery facing and representatives of Girls Inc. of Leeds–Grenville. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Conestoga on a point of order.

**Mr. Michael Harris:** Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the establishment of a select committee to research funding for rare diseases.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Kitchener–Conestoga is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? I heard a no.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** I'd like to introduce Equal Voice and thank them for a wonderful breakfast and panel discussion this morning and for sponsoring Girls Government day.

### DEFERRED VOTES

#### AGRICULTURE INSURANCE ACT (AMENDING THE CROP INSURANCE ACT, 1996), 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'ASSURANCE AGRICOLE (MODIFIANT LA LOI DE 1996 SUR L'ASSURANCE-RÉCOLTE)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 40, An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Projet de loi 40, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1146 to 1151.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would the members please take their seats?

On May 25, Mr. Leal moved third reading of Bill 40.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura  
Anderson, Granville  
Armstrong, Teresa J.

Gates, Wayne  
Gélinas, France  
Gravelle, Michael

Miller, Paul  
Mordi, Reza  
Munro, Julia



Arnott, Ted  
 Bailey, Robert  
 Baker, Yvan  
 Balkissoon, Bas  
 Ballard, Chris  
 Barrett, Toby  
 Berardinetti, Lorenzo  
 Bisson, Gilles  
 Bradley, James J.  
 Chan, Michael  
 Chiarelli, Bob  
 Clark, Steve  
 Colle, Mike  
 Coteau, Michael  
 Crack, Grant  
 Damerla, Dipika  
 Del Duca, Steven  
 Delaney, Bob  
 Dhillon, Vic  
 Dickson, Joe  
 DiNovo, Cheri  
 Dong, Han  
 Duguid, Brad  
 Dunlop, Garfield  
 Fife, Catherine  
 Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
 Forster, Cindy  
 Fraser, John  
 French, Jennifer K.

Gertzky, Lisa  
 Hardeman, Ernie  
 Harris, Michael  
 Hatfield, Percy  
 Hoggarth, Ann  
 Horwath, Andrea  
 Hoskins, Eric  
 Hudak, Tim  
 Hunter, Mitzie  
 Jaczek, Helena  
 Jones, Sylvia  
 Kiwala, Sophie  
 Kwinter, Monte  
 Lalonde, Marie-France  
 Leal, Jeff  
 MacCharles, Tracy  
 MacLeod, Lisa  
 Malhi, Harinder  
 Martins, Cristina  
 Martow, Gila  
 Matthews, Deborah  
 Mauro, Bill  
 McDonell, Jim  
 McGarry, Kathryn  
 McMahon, Eleanor  
 McMeekin, Ted  
 McNaughton, Monte  
 Meilleur, Madeleine  
 Milczyn, Peter Z.

Murray, Glen R.  
 Naidoo-Harris, Indira  
 Naqvi, Yasir  
 Natyshak, Taras  
 Nicholls, Rick  
 Oraziotti, David  
 Pettapiece, Randy  
 Potts, Arthur  
 Qaadri, Shafiq  
 Rinaldi, Lou  
 Sandals, Liz  
 Sattler, Peggy  
 Scott, Laurie  
 Sergio, Mario  
 Smith, Todd  
 Sousa, Charles  
 Takhar, Harinder S.  
 Taylor, Monique  
 Thibeault, Glenn  
 Thompson, Lisa M.  
 Vanthof, John  
 Vernile, Daiene  
 Walker, Bill  
 Wilson, Jim  
 Wong, Soo  
 Wynne, Kathleen O.  
 Yakabuski, John  
 Yurek, Jeff  
 Zimmer, David

the group, which include Kathleen; Sylvia and her husband, Peter; David White; and Lyndsey.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** My guests haven't arrived yet, but they are from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada: Lisa McCoy, president, Ontario and Nunavut division; Abidah Shamji, manager of government relations; Andrea Strath, regional director; Joanne Ticknor, director; Andrea Butcher-Milne, ambassador; Gregory Bourne, ambassador; Stella Rose, ambassador; James Jackson, ambassador; Marni Wolfe, ambassador; and, last but not least, John Duffy, MS ambassador. I welcome them here to Queen's Park today.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** This is the second time this session that I rise to speak about multiple sclerosis. I do so in recognition of the 100,000 Canadians suffering from MS, for which there is no cure, especially my loved ones and friends directly impacted by this disease. I dedicate this statement to a long-time friend and sister of our MP, Larry Miller—her name is Mary Lou Miller—and to Dianne Hepburn and Kathy Broeckel, all from the great riding of Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound.

I also wanted to welcome volunteers from the MS Society of Canada for World MS Day at Queen's Park. This year, the MS society is taking its awareness campaign to the next level by asking all of us to step up to the challenge by joining #TeamFight and to participate in local events.

I look forward to supporting events put on by the Bruce Grey chapter in my riding. In fact, this chapter has recently expanded to include both Bruce and Grey counties in an effort to improve access and service to constituents living with MS in our region.

I commend this group on its tireless advocacy and continued efforts to raise awareness about the suffering of people directly affected by MS and the need for improvements to supports for MS victims, as they are unable to work or can only work occasionally.

I thank all of you for acknowledging and wearing carnations today and I encourage you to get involved in your local MS walk or bike tour and continue to fight to end MS.

I thank all of the volunteers and all the staff people who tirelessly give for the benefit of others.

### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** In Canada, citizens have a greater risk of developing multiple sclerosis than anywhere else in the world. Today, we, as members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, can recognize the role we play in supporting those affected by MS. We must ensure that the over 35,000 Ontarians living with MS receive quality, coordinated health care and continue

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 96; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Third reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

There being no further deferred votes, this House stands recessed until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1154 to 1500.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn:** It's my pleasure to introduce to the Legislature Armand Conant, the grandson of the 12th Premier of Ontario, Gordon Conant. Armand Conant is a resident of Etobicoke–Lakeshore.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I just noticed a good friend of mine, Armand Conant, is in the Legislature. He is the grandson of a former Premier of the province of Ontario. I want to welcome Armand. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I have a few introductions this afternoon. We have some guests coming in—I think they're just being checked in—from the MS Society of Canada. That would be Lisa McCoy, Abidah Shamji, Andrea Strath, Joanne Ticknor, Andrea Butcher-Milne, Gregory Bourne, Stella Rose, James Jackson, Marni Wolfe and John Duffy.

I think some of them are still being checked in, but I wanted to welcome them to Queen's Park.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm also waiting for a few people who are clearing security. They're here to raise awareness of Ehlers-Danlos syndrome and they include my son Mitch Martow, his friend Jacob Levitt, and members of

to advocate for the hard-working caregivers who help their loved ones get through the daily challenges of life with MS. Above all, we must ensure that those living with MS are supported so that they can live independent and fulfilling lives.

Today I am wearing a carnation to show my solidarity with the MS community and in recognition of World MS Day. I encourage the constituents in my riding to join with me by sharing this message on social media and getting involved in a local MS event such as an MS walk or an MS bike tour. I urge each and every one of us to join this fight to end MS.

#### ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Ms. Soo Wong:** I rise today in celebration of Asian Heritage Month. In 2001, former senator Vivienne Poy brought forward a Senate motion designating May as Asian Heritage Month in Canada. This designation provides an opportunity for us to recognize the long and rich history of Asian Canadians and their social, cultural, economic and political contribution to this province and Canada.

In my riding of Scarborough–Agincourt there are many Asian community leaders who have made their mark in business, culture, industry and sport, like May Yee, a lawyer and founder of the Scarborough Chinese Outreach Committee and recipient of a Leading Women Building Communities Award; Wei Chen Yi, president of the Confederation of Toronto Chinese Canadian Organizations and president of FoodyMart; Hughes Eng, recipient of the Order of Ontario and long-time community activist; and Azelia Liu, a star field hockey athlete and Quest for Gold recipient.

Having the privilege of representing one of the most diverse and multicultural ridings in the greater Toronto area, I know first-hand that diversity strengthens our communities, contributes to our economy and makes Ontario a great place to work and play.

While May is drawing to a close, I encourage everyone to continue to celebrate and recognize Ontario's dynamic Asian community.

#### LIBERATION OF THE NETHERLANDS

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** Exciting news: Tomorrow I'm meeting royalty. On top of that, I'm having high tea with the King and Queen of the Netherlands. King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima of the Netherlands are going to be in Beamsville, in my riding of Niagara West–Glanbrook. As members know, we've all risen, all three parties, in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands and the major leading role that Canadian soldiers played in freeing that country. The King and Queen are here to help celebrate and mark that occasion.

I always like to say that in my riding of Niagara West–Glanbrook, the second language is actually Dutch. There are over a million people in Canada with Dutch heritage,

but we got most of the quality in Niagara West–Glanbrook. A large number of Dutch immigrants have settled in west Niagara. They've started businesses. They've founded churches. Leaders in civic life, they've built schools and woven a strong fabric in our community. I'm proud of that.

King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima are giving out new scholarships at the University of Waterloo to celebrate that relationship. They're going to be meeting with veterans who were actually there, freeing the Netherlands from the Nazis in World War II. And then they're heading to Beamsville, to CosMic greenhouses, an orchid specialist, celebrating the work of Neil van Steekelenburg and his brother Mike. They came here 11 years ago and started a business, making the best orchids, I'd say, in North America. I don't know what I'm more excited about: meeting the King and Queen or celebrating what my constituents are doing with the greenhouse business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I'm not lucky enough to have high tea, but I do get to greet them.

#### MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** I'm proud to have been a part of the fight against multiple sclerosis for many years. I've provided care and arranged home services for many patients with MS, in and out of hospitals, in my home community of Cambridge, North Dumfries and Waterloo region in my time as a nurse and a care coordinator at the Waterloo–Wellington CCAC.

Canada has the highest rate of MS in the world and it's our job as public servants to support citizens of this great country when they are faced with such an unpredictable disease. In Ontario, over 35,000 people are living with this disease.

I encourage my fellow members to advocate for income and employment support systems, which will ensure that those affected by MS will get the help as soon as they need it. Quality and coordinated health care is needed by those living with MS so that they and their loved ones can continue to live healthy, independent, fulfilling lives.

Today and throughout MS Awareness Month, I'm wearing a carnation to signal my fight against MS, and I encourage all of you, as well as the constituents in your ridings as well as mine, to join me to show our solidarity.

1510

I want to thank the many great volunteers and staff of the newly formed Grand River chapter of the MS Society of Canada, which supports my community of Cambridge and the Waterloo region. Thank you all for choosing to fight to end MS. I urge each of us to continue demonstrating this fight during World MS Day and beyond.

#### EHLERS-DANLOS SYNDROME

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I just want to mention that my son Mitch has made it in. He's on the top row in the back with members of the Ehlers-Danlos syndrome support



group of Ontario. There are two women up here as well who join them.

I'm rising today to speak about Ehlers-Danlos syndrome. This is May, which is awareness month for EDS. Ehlers-Danlos syndrome is often misunderstood, under-recognized and difficult to diagnose. It's a connective tissue disorder. I know this because my own son, Mitch, was diagnosed with this condition only two years ago.

Its symptoms can range from extreme joint hypermobility to joint dislocations, impaired mobility, skin fragility, cranial instability, marked dizziness, cardiac irregularity and severe chronic pain. The vascular form of Ehlers-Danlos syndrome places affected people at high risk of death due to spontaneous blood vessel rupture at an early age.

Unfortunately, this disease is relatively unknown among the general public, and only some medical specialists fully recognize the nuances of Ehlers-Danlos syndrome. I hope we are successful in bringing EDS into the spotlight due to the serious, even life-threatening, effects it can have on an individual and their family. It's often misdiagnosed, and many individuals have only received their diagnoses after seeing numerous medical specialists and undertaking many expensive medical tests.

As legislators, we can play a role by raising public awareness, while ensuring adequate funding for medical research, patient care and drug affordability. This statement is intended to provide a first step in the process of identifying best care practices for patients and expediting medical research to find new treatments for Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

### NEUROFIBROMATOSIS

**Ms. Ann Hoggarth:** I rise today to help bring awareness to neurofibromatosis. In many communities across Canada, including the city of Barrie, May is recognized as NF month. On May 17, World NF Awareness Day, the CN Tower and Niagara Falls were alight in blue and green, which are the official colours of NF.

NF was once mistakenly thought to be Proteus syndrome, commonly referred to as Elephant Man disease. It is the most common neurological disorder caused by a single gene, occurring in one in every 3,000 children born, and can lead to disfigurement; blindness; skeletal abnormalities such as scoliosis; dermal, brain and spinal tumours; loss of limbs; malignancy; and learning disabilities.

Five-year-old Noah Daly lives in my riding of Barrie, and lives with NF, which caused optic gliomas, autism and a peripheral nerve sheath tumour that is known to disfigure.

Noah's father, John Daly, is the director of the NF Society of Ontario, a volunteer organization and Ontario-based charity that provides support and services for NF families. In addition to providing assistance to individuals and families, they work closely with clinical and research professionals who specialize in the treatment of NF.

Thank you to John and all the dedicated volunteers at NF Ontario for the important work they do every day. This is a very important cause for Noah and the other people stricken with this condition.

### BEEF FARMERS OF ONTARIO

**Mr. John Vanthof:** I'm sure that some of us might have a hard time staying awake this afternoon, because we all had a fantastic lunch brought to us by the cattlemen. I guess now they're the Beef Farmers of Ontario; I keep thinking of them as cattlemen. It's one of the highlights of the year at Queen's Park—great tenderloin.

I'd like to thank the cattlemen for taking the opportunity. The vice-president of the Beef Farmers of Ontario, Matt Bowman, comes from my riding. I had a meeting with him and his colleagues this afternoon.

Like many farmers, there are a lot of places they'd rather be today rather than talking to politicians. But the people who are on the boards of commodity associations take time away from their own farms and actually make a lot of sacrifices to make sure that people who have the chance to change regulations and make things better—or worse—understand the sector. The cattlemen—the Beef Farmers of Ontario; I'll keep calling them "cattlemen"—have had a tough decade because of BSE and the price has plummeted. Now things are coming back; they're looking a lot better.

They are one of the base components, the cornerstones, of our agriculture sector. I'd like to commend them for the hard work they do and for the good food they provide, not only to us at Queen's Park today but to our province.

### MEMBER'S GRANDCHILD

**Mr. John Fraser:** I'd just like to say something on a personal note. My father used to say that every baby that is born means new hope for the world. We have a bit of a case of stubborn hope in our family right now. My son, James, and his partner, Lucy—there is an impending birth today. I'm very excited about it, but it's been about four days, which beats my record of three days. That's what I put my mother through.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** Induce, induce.

**Mr. John Fraser:** They've been inducing.

I just want to say to James and Lucy: Linda and I love you. We're very proud of you. You're going to be great parents. I know that Josef and Alena feel exactly the same way. Your grandparents, Mary, Lorne and Yvonne, are all very proud of you as well.

I'm a bit jealous of all those people who are back in Ottawa—because all my family is back there. You'll be born and I won't be able to be there to welcome you into the world. So I'm going to do it from here. I can only call you "little one" because no one has disclosed the name choices to me—I don't know whether that was deliberate.

I want to say we're very excited that you're coming, and very hopeful. You really are new hope. The world is

really a wonderful place, and I look forward to you growing, learning and being with us.

*Applause.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Let's jump right into question period.

I thank all members for their statements. It is now time for reports by committees.

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

### STANDING COMMITTEE ON REGULATIONS AND PRIVATE BILLS

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I beg leave to present a report from the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills and move its adoption.

**The Clerk-at-the-Table (Ms. Anne Stokes):** Your committee begs to report the following bill without amendment:

Bill Pr19, An Act respecting the Supply Chain Management Association Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Shall the report be received and adopted? Agreed? Agreed.

*Report adopted.*

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### 1476263 ONTARIO INC. ACT, 2015

Mr. Hudak moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill Pr22, An Act to revive 1476263 Ontario Inc.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Pursuant to standing order 86, this bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills.

### ETHNIC MEDIA WEEK ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA SEMAINE DES MÉDIAS ETHNIQUES

Mr. Smith moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 105, An Act to proclaim Ethnic Media Week / Projet de loi 105, Loi proclamant la Semaine des médias ethniques.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Todd Smith:** In light of some recent changes in Ontario's ethnic broadcast industry and media—some ethnic programs have already been cancelled and others are wondering what their future is—we feel it's important to draw attention to the importance of ethnic media in Ontario. And we feel that a bill like this declaring a week in honour of those producers who work in ethnic media

will do just that: draw attention to the work they do and ensure that we pay tribute, remember and honour their language and their culture here in Ontario. I look forward to support from all three parties.

### PROTECTING CONDOMINIUM OWNERS ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DES PROPRIÉTAIRES DE CONDOMINIUMS

Mr. Oraziotti moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 106, An Act to amend the Condominium Act, 1998, to enact the Condominium Management Services Act, 2015 and to amend other Acts with respect to condominiums / Projet de loi 106, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1998 sur les condominiums, édictant la Loi de 2015 sur les services de gestion de condominiums et modifiant d'autres lois en ce qui concerne les condominiums.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. David Oraziotti:** We're proposing legislation that would greatly increase protections for condominium owners in Ontario, improve how condo corporations are run and ensure that condo boards are well governed. The legislation, if passed, would allow for two new authorities to be created: a condo authority which would train and educate condo directors, provide owners with a single source of reliable information and help prevent common disputes; the second, a licensing authority, would ensure training and licensing for Ontario's condo managers.

Speaker, I'd like to thank and welcome the numerous individuals in the members' gallery for their contribution to the proposed legislation.

## MOTIONS

### HOUSE SITTINGS

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Naqvi moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

Do we agree? I heard a no.

All those in favour, say "aye."

All those opposed, say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1523 to 1528.*



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All members please take their seats.

Mr. Naqvi moves that, pursuant to standing order 6(c)(ii), the House shall meet from 6:45 p.m. to 12 midnight on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, for the purpose of considering government business.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Meilleur, Madeleine
Anderson, Granville	Hardeman, Ernie	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Arnott, Ted	Hoggarth, Ann	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Hoskins, Eric	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Hudak, Tim	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Mitzie	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Nicholls, Rick
Bradley, James J.	Jones, Sylvia	Oraziotti, David
Chan, Michael	Kiwaia, Sophie	Potts, Arthur
Chiarelli, Bob	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Clark, Steve	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Crack, Grant	MacLaren, Jack	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dickson, Joe	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Walker, Bill
Duguid, Brad	McDonnell, Jim	Wong, Soo
Fedeli, Victor	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMahon, Eleanor	Yurek, Jeff
Fraser, John	McMeekin, Ted	Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul
Bisson, Gilles	Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras
French, Jennifer K.	Gretzky, Lisa	Vanthof, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 69; the nays are 9.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### CORRECTION OF RECORD

**Mr. John Fraser:** Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order.

**Mr. John Fraser:** I correct my correct. In actual fact, Sloane Ainsley Fraser was born at 12:16 today, and so she has arrived. Welcome to the world.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** While it is a point of order to correct one's record, I have to admonish the member for using a BlackBerry to read from.

### PETITIONS

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I have a petition here from Darlene Kaboni from Garson and her community members.

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I couldn't agree with this more. I will sign my name and send it to the Clerks with Kerry.

#### LONG-TERM CARE

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas there is an evident shortage of long-term-care beds in the vicinity of Clarence-Rockland, all existing facilities have long waiting lists.

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Demand the establishment of a long-term-care facility within the urban area of the city of Clarence-Rockland."

I agree with this petition, and I'm happy to put my signature on it and give it to page Jany.

#### ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the \$100 ODSP Work-Related Benefit provides a critically important source of funds to people with disabilities on ODSP who work, giving them the ability to pay for much-needed, ongoing work-related expenses such as transportation, clothing, food, personal care and hygiene items, and child care; and

"Whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services plans to eliminate the Work-Related Benefit as part of a restructuring of OW and ODSP employment benefits, and has said that ongoing work-related expenses will not be covered by its new restructured Employment-Related Benefit; and

"Whereas eliminating the Work-Related Benefit will take approximately \$36 million annually out of the pockets of people with disabilities on ODSP who work; and

"Whereas a survey conducted by the ODSP Action Coalition between December 2014 and February 2015 shows that 18% of respondents who currently receive the Work-Related Benefit fear having to quit their jobs as a result of the loss of this important source of funds; 12.5% fear having to reduce the amount of money they spend on

food, or rely on food banks; and 10% fear losing the ability to travel, due to the cost of transportation; and

"Whereas people receiving ODSP already struggle to get by, and incomes on ODSP provide them with little or no ability to cover these costs from regular benefits; and

"Whereas undermining employment among ODSP recipients would run directly counter to the ministry's goal of increasing employment and the provincial government's poverty reduction goal of increasing income security;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to stop the provincial government's plan to eliminate the ODSP Work-Related Benefit."

This was given to me by the people at Community Living Tillsonburg, and I affix my signature, as I totally agree with this petition.

### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I have these petitions that were collected by Mr. Reid in Sun Valley in my riding, in part of Sudbury. It reads as follows:

"Whereas the NDP MPP for Timiskaming-Cochrane, John Vanthof, has introduced Bill 46 in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario so that" utility task vehicles "would be treated like all-terrain vehicles ... by the Highway Traffic Act; ...

"Whereas this bill will have positive economic impact on clubs, manufacturers, dealers and rental shops and will boost revenues to communities promoting this outdoor activity;"

They "petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To vote in favour of MPP Vanthof's Bill 46 to allow UTVs the same access as ATVs in the Highway Traffic Act."

I fully support this petition, will affix my name to it and ask my good page Maya to bring it to the Clerk.

### WATER FLUORIDATION

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Ontario Legislative Assembly. It is coming in by the hundreds. It's entitled "Fluoridate All Ontario Drinking Water." It reads as follows:

"Whereas fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in virtually all water supplies, even the ocean; and

"Whereas scientific studies conducted during the past 70 years have consistently shown that the fluoridation of community water supplies is a safe and effective means of preventing dental decay, and is a public health measure endorsed by more than 90 national and international health organizations; and

"Whereas dental decay is the second-most frequent condition suffered by children, and is one of the leading causes of absences from school; and

"Whereas Health Canada has determined that the optimal concentration of fluoride in municipal drinking water for dental health is 0.7 mg/L, providing optimal

dental health benefits, and well below the maximum acceptable concentrations; and

"Whereas the decision to add fluoride to municipal drinking water is a patchwork of individual choices across Ontario, with municipal councils often vulnerable to the influence of misinformation, and studies of questionable or no scientific merit;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the ministries of the government of Ontario adopt the number one recommendation made by the Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health in a 2012 report on oral health in Ontario, and amend all applicable legislation and regulations to make the fluoridation of municipal drinking water mandatory in all municipal water systems across the province of Ontario."

Speaker, I'm pleased to sign and to support this petition and to send it down with page Emma.

### WIND TURBINES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas an industrial wind turbine development is to be constructed approximately 3.5 kilometres west of the village of Crysler by EDP Renewables; and

"Whereas the project will" include "25-50 mega wind turbines and this has raised concerns by the citizens of Crysler and surrounding area related to health, safety and property values; and

"Whereas the Green Energy Act allows wind turbine developments to bypass meaningful public input and municipal approval;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of the Environment revise the Green Energy Act to allow full public input and municipal approvals on all industrial wind farm developments, and the Minister of the Environment conduct a thorough scientific study on the health and environmental impacts of industrial wind turbines."

I have a pile of these that I will be passing off to page Duncan.

1540

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:



"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I sign the petition and give it to the page.

### CREDIT UNIONS

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I have a petition here that's addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support our 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario's economy and create jobs in three ways:

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

"—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

"—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries."

I agree with this petition. I'm going to affix my name to it and send it to the table with page Madeleine.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Stormont—oh, sorry, the member from Ajax—Pickering.

### AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

**Mr. Joe Dickson:** I have a petition to the Legislature of Ontario:

"Whereas the community of Windsor—Essex county has one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada resulting in stressful lives and financial inadequacies for many of its residents and businesses; and

"Whereas recently the Ford Motor Company was considering Windsor, Ontario, as a potential site for a new global engine that would create 1,000 new jobs (and as many as 7,000 spinoff jobs) for our community; and

"Whereas partnership with government was critical to secure this investment from Ford; and

"Whereas the inability of Ford and the Ontario government to come to an agreement for partnership contributed to the loss of this project;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To insist that the Ontario government exhaust all available opportunities to reopen the discussions around the Ford investment in Windsor and to develop a national auto strategy and review current policy meant to attract investment in the auto sector."

I shall affix my signature to it and pass it to Sheila.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I did an injustice to the member from Stormont—Dundas—South Glengarry. He's up.

### HYDRO RATES

**Mr. Jim McDonell:** Thank you, Speaker.

I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Green Energy Act has driven up the cost of electricity in Ontario due to unrealistic subsidies for certain energy sources, including the world's highest subsidies for solar power; and

"Whereas this cost is passed on to ratepayers through the global adjustment, which can account for almost half of a ratepayer's hydro bill; and

"Whereas the high cost of energy is severely impacting the quality of life of Ontario's residents, especially fixed-income seniors; and

"Whereas it is imperative to remedy Liberal mismanagement in the energy sector by implementing immediate reforms detailed in the Ontario PC white paper *Paths to Prosperity—Affordable Energy*;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To immediately repeal the Green Energy Act, 2009, and all other statutes that artificially inflate the cost of electricity with the aim of bringing down electricity rates and abolishing expensive surcharges such as the global adjustment and debt retirement charges."

I agree with this and will be passing it off to page Kerry.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** A petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families" and seniors "benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I sign my name to it and give it to Brady.

### SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

**M. Grant Crack:** J'ai une pétition adressée à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario.

« Attendu qu'il y a un manque criant de lits de soins de longue durée dans la cité de Clarence-Rockland et environs, les listes d'attente sont très longues.

« Nous, soussignés, adressons à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario la pétition suivante :

« Exigeons la mise en place d'un centre de soins de longue durée à l'intérieur de l'aire urbaine de la cité de Clarence-Rockland. »

J'appuie cette pétition. J'y ai mis mon nom, Grant, et je vais donner la pétition à Emma.

## LANDFILL

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I have a petition here to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas many of the resources of this planet are finite and are necessary to sustain both life and quality of life for future generations;

"Whereas the disposal of resources in landfills creates environmental hazards which have significant human and financial costs;

"Whereas all levels of government are elected to guarantee their constituents' physical, financial, emotional and mental well-being;

"Whereas the health risks to the community and watershed increase in direct relationship to the proximity of any landfill site;

"Whereas the placement of a landfill in a limestone quarry has been shown to be detrimental;

"Whereas the placement of a landfill in the headwaters of multiple highly vulnerable aquifers is detrimental;

"Therefore be it resolved that we, the undersigned, humbly petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To implement a moratorium in Oxford county, Ontario, on any future landfill construction or approval until such time as a full and comprehensive review of alternatives has been completed which would examine best practices in other jurisdictions around the world;

"That this review of alternatives would give particular emphasis to (a) practices which involve the total recycling or composting of all products currently destined for landfill sites in Ontario and (b) the production of goods which can be practically and efficiently recycled or reused so as to not require disposal."

I thank you very much for the opportunity to present this petition. I affix my signature as I agree with the petition.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION DES ANIMAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care / Projet de loi 80, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario et la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche en ce qui concerne la possession et l'élevage d'épaulards ainsi que les exigences administratives relatives aux soins dispensés aux animaux.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Naqvi.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me to speak on this very important bill. It's my honour to begin third and final reading on Bill 80. I will be sharing my time with my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough—Rouge River.

If passed, this legislation will prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orca whales in Ontario. It will allow for the establishment of additional standards that require management, oversight practices, professional services, and the collecting and disclosing of information intended to ensure the appropriate level of care of animals, including marine mammals.

The proposed amendments to the OSPCA Act will also enable the requirement for zoos and aquariums to have animal welfare committees on location. These animal welfare committees are consistent with the recommendations of the UBC report and best practices in research facilities that care for marine mammals.

## 1550

Speaker, at this time, I would also like to thank my parliamentary assistant, the member from Scarborough—Rouge River, for his valuable contributions to Bill 80. He worked extremely hard on the bill, and I thank him for guiding the bill through the Standing Committee on Social Policy.

I also want to thank all the members of the Standing Committee on Social Policy for their contributions. I know the member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, who will speak later, also was quite actively and passionately involved in this file, and we had some good conversations. I want to thank him, and all members, for that.

I also want to thank the hard-working ministerial staff at the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, who have done a lot of work, not just on this bill, when Bill 80 was brought forward, but for some years. That work goes back to when the Attorney General, the member from Ottawa—Vanier—who was the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services—almost three years ago, started the process of retaining the expertise of Dr. Rosen from the University of British Columbia, to procure an expert report that could help guide us as to how best to treat marine mammals. So this work has been ongoing. I want to thank the Attorney General for her contributions and, of course, the staff at the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services for their hard work.

In Bill 80, the government has taken a considered and balanced path that recognizes the characteristics of the



orca and the need to strengthen protections and oversight for all marine mammals. The member from Scarborough—Rouge River, in his time, will set out the objectives of Bill 80. Before he does so, I would like to add some thoughts of my own on this important day and debate.

I'm proud to be on the right side of history, and I would like to thank Ontarians for their support in helping our government to move this proposed legislation forward. If Bill 80 is passed today, Ontario will be the first jurisdiction in Canada, and one of a growing number around the world, to prohibit the breeding and acquisition of orcas. This summer, Ontario will also be the first province in Canada to set specific standards of care for marine mammals.

Speaker, our government has carefully considered the impact of these proposed changes. We considered the characteristics of orcas and determined that they should not be kept in captivity. That is why we are prohibiting the breeding and acquisition of orcas in Ontario, if Bill 80 is passed.

We are establishing a statutory framework so that animal care committees and other administrative measures can be required, and so that marine mammals remaining in captivity receive expert care, to ensure that they receive the best possible quality of care.

Before I pass the floor to the member from Scarborough—Rouge River, I want to say in conclusion that our government is committed to making sure that marine mammals and all animals in Ontario are protected and receive the best possible treatment and care. Prohibiting the future possession and breeding of orcas, and moving forward on standards of care that will be among the best in the world, is something that Ontarians expect and that these animals deserve.

Thank you, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Before I go to the member from Rouge River—normally, we rotate in this situation. If it's okay with the House, I'll let the member from Rouge River go, unless you wanted—

**Interjection:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay. Go ahead.

**Mr. Bas Balkisson:** Thank you, Speaker. Thank you very much for that.

I'm happy to follow the minister on this particular bill. If I could say, public attitudes about the care and treatment of marine mammals in captivity are shifting as we come to better understand the science surrounding this issue. Our government is proud to be at the forefront of this change. I hope that this House will join us in supporting Bill 80 and passing this important piece of animal welfare legislation.

I would like to take this opportunity to touch on some of the highlights of Bill 80.

First and foremost, if this bill is passed, any facility that possesses an orca on or after March 23, 2015, when Bill 80 was first introduced, will be responsible for the removal of that animal within six months of royal assent of Bill 80. Failure to do so could result in penalties

and/or imprisonment of up to \$60,000 and up to two years upon conviction, and up to \$250,000 and two years upon failure to comply with a court order.

Kiska, the only orca currently in Ontario, will be allowed to remain at her home in Marineland in Niagara Falls. This bill does not require her to be relocated to another facility.

Speaker, the strength of any bill lies in the power to enforce. Ontario has the strongest animal protection legislation in Canada. New investment by our government has enabled the OSPCA and its affiliates to strengthen enforcement by:

- improving coverage to underserved areas of the province, such as rural and northern Ontario;

- creating a major case management team that is responsible for coordinating investigations that require specialized expertise;

- introducing a 24/7 centralized dispatch service, to ensure timely responses to complaints of animal abuse and neglect across the province; and

- establishing regular inspections of all zoos and aquariums, and developing a registry of those facilities to support the inspection process.

I am pleased to report that every zoo and aquarium in Ontario is inspected at least twice annually since our support for this program began.

If passed, Bill 80 will grant the OSPCA the authority to demand that facilities provide records and other information respecting compliance with prescribed standards of care or administrative requirements, within a specified time frame. This would help to ensure that prescribed standards are being met.

The bill also proposes to clarify that OSPCA authority to inspect a facility includes all places where animals are kept, if they are being kept for the purposes of exhibition, entertainment, boarding, hire or sale. This includes places where animals are kept in the off-season.

Bill 80, if passed, would expand existing regulation-making authority. It would allow for the establishment of additional standards that could include requiring management oversight practices, professional services, and the collecting and disclosing of information intended to ensure appropriate levels of care of any animal, including marine mammals.

The proposed legislation would pave the way for animal welfare committees to be established at non-research zoos, aquariums and other facilities that keep animals. These committees would provide the necessary oversight to help ensure the long-term well-being of animals in each facility's care.

For marine mammals, this oversight could include producing a written animal management plan, and producing a written veterinary care program, which could include an annual physical examination for each marine mammal. In addition, animal welfare committees could assist in addressing appropriate human interaction with marine mammals at an exhibition park.

Related amendments to the Animals for Research Act ensure that facilities governed by that act are subject to the same prohibitions of orcas as zoos and aquariums.

The people of Ontario demand the highest standards of care and enforcement for all animals, regardless of their habitat. Public confidence in the well-being of marine mammals is a critical issue for our government. Bill 80, if passed, gives the public assurances that Ontario is taking the necessary steps to ensure the best possible care and well-being of marine mammals in captivity.

We would be ensuring that no new orcas come into the province. We would be setting tough new penalties for individuals or entities that might try to violate this prohibition. We would be strengthening the protection of animals in captivity by supporting the inspection and enforcement authority of the OSPCA.

1600

Bill 80, if passed, would complete our government's three-point plan introduced in 2012 to ensure Ontario continues to have the strongest animal protection legislation in Canada. It would build on the work we started in 2009 with the first major overhaul of the OSPCA Act in 90 years.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his work in bringing this bill forward, members of the committee and all those who came to speak before the committee. I urge all of my colleagues in the Legislature to support this important piece of legislation as we take the next step in ensuring the protection of marine mammals in our province, because that is what Ontarians expect and these animals deserve.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I am pleased to rise on third reading of Bill 80. I appreciate the kind comments from the minister. I enjoyed working with the parliamentary assistant. I will say too I do hope we'll get a chance to work together on the regulations that move forward because they're going to be important to the future of the facility and the animal welfare of the creatures that do exist at Marineland.

There are three points I want to make—and my colleagues want to speak to the bill. Job number one, the goals of the PC caucus, at the top of the list was to make sure Ontario has the highest level of standards for animal welfare at facilities like Marineland—basically make sure we have a made-in-Ontario solution using the most modern, scientific evidence to have world-class standards in animal welfare. That was job number one.

Job number two was to avoid closure of the facility. I'll talk a bit more about the other case. Some feel that these facilities should be closed down. I do not, and I'm going to talk about the reasons why, including the economic benefit of having Marineland in my home area of Niagara and in the riding of my colleague from Niagara Falls.

Third was the importance of the humane amendment to allow the last remaining orca, Kiska, to have a companion as opposed to what effectively in Bill 80 is a life sentence of isolation. I think that was wrong.

Let me get into these issues one at a time, Speaker. We could have taken an ideological approach to this

legislation but instead we chose—what I think is a sensible, a very balanced, pragmatic approach to ensure two things: We'd have world-class standards when it comes to animal welfare, and that we continue to have the jobs and investment that come from an active marine mammal park in Niagara Falls at Marineland.

I know some would argue ideologically that the park should be able to do what it wants, that this is park property and the market would decide proper standards for animal care; the market would decide if standards are adequate or not important at all. We don't subscribe to that ideological approach; in fact, I think my colleague would agree. We didn't hear that from anybody at the committee either. It's a point of view we disagree with.

There is, on the other side of the coin, an ideological approach that says that animals of any kind should not be held in captivity. I know that there are Ontarians who subscribe to that view, Speaker. It's their right to do so. I think that they are well-meaning and passionate, and they care deeply about animals and their welfare. They've come to the conclusion that facilities such as Marineland, the Metro zoo, the High Park Zoo should all be shut down. We also disagree with that point of view. We believe that institutions like Marineland play an important role not only in the jobs they create, but in allowing scientific study of animals, the educational opportunities, and I'll discuss that more later.

So we did not choose either of the ideological routes. We chose a very pragmatic, practical path based on the highest level of animal welfare standards. In fact, the government hired a renowned, respected expert in Dr. Rosen from the University of British Columbia. We commend that appointment. We agree with Dr. Rosen, as a highly qualified individual, to lead a review of those standards, and he produced a report to the government. In his report Dr. Rosen recommended the creation of—the adaptation was called the CCAC standards, the Canadian Council on Animal Care standards—a Canadian standard based on the latest available information and scientific research for animal welfare when it comes to creatures like cetaceans—dolphins, orcas, beluga whales and other mammals.

The government did, in its regulatory approach, adopt the vast majority of those recommendations, except for one, and I'll get to that later on, which I think was an unfortunate omission by the government that will sentence the orca Kiska to a lifetime of isolation.

We thought this important, because we thought, "What does the average Ontarian think? What do we think?" And that is, if you're going to have animals in captivity of any kind, you want to make sure you have the best standards in the world. I think that's what Ontarians would demand. Then they'd have confidence that in the facility the animals are treated well, and they could enjoy the entertainment and educational aspects of Marineland—and, from that, the jobs. We thought the best approach in this bill was a sensible, balanced approach based on science—high standards, first and foremost. So we looked to the best science; we looked to expert opinion.



Look, people who object to zoos can always choose not to attend. They don't go; they don't take their children. They can choose not to attend. But there are a million people in the summer who do, including me, my family, our neighbours. I take my daughter to Marineland, and hopefully I will get a chance to bring Maitland this year, along with Miller, to Marineland. There are a million visitors a year.

Here's something very important, too, that we shouldn't lose sight of, for those who want to close the park down altogether for ideological reasons: They also include programs for kids with disabilities. Autism Ontario runs an important program through Marineland. Make-A-Wish has enabled 3,500 special-needs kids to achieve their dream—kids obviously in extraordinarily difficult circumstances and the families who want to go to Marineland; 3,500 have done so through Make-A-Wish.

Some may disagree, but I also believe in my heart and my mind that if you see these majestic creatures up close, you get a greater appreciation for their life, a greater appreciation for the science, the nature of these mammals. I think there's an important educational aspect to this that inspires a love for dolphins, orcas or seals etc. by seeing them up close and personal. I just don't believe you get the same experience by watching it on TV or through the Internet. I know some people believe that; I don't.

Let's explore that. If you went down that ideological path and you said, "We should close this down because we don't believe marine mammals should be kept in captivity"—I know some people said that at the committee. They were honest and heartfelt. What would be the impact? Well, 700 people would lose their jobs, with indirect jobs in the thousands as well. Visitor spending as a result of Marineland in Niagara is about \$152 million a year, and is the single biggest marketer of any institution, any facility, any government in the peninsula, at \$4.5 million a year.

So I understand the ideological approach of closing it down. I disagree with it. We can't lose sight of the economic impacts. I think a better path is to have the highest standards possible and allow the park to operate. People will have confidence in it and it will continue to flourish, hire people and invest in the community.

We brought forward amendments as part of this process to do just that, to make sure that the CCAC standards were the ones that are adopted by the government. We brought forward practical, science-based amendments to say that if the SPCA inspectors are going to go there to evaluate if an animal's in distress, they should be trained in marine mammal biology, with some kind of certification process. I want to know that they know the difference between a dolphin and a dog, not just by looking at them or the spelling but by how their biology works.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Dolphin and duck: One flies and the other one's in the water.

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I think they would have to go a little bit further than that, though, if they were evaluating

whether they were in distress and how they could be treated.

Sadly, these recommendations were voted down by the government. I think our approach is wise. The amendments would have made it a bill that we could have confidence in, that would strengthen standards. They voted them down, every one of them.

Here's another thing I'm worried about. We heard at the committee from some groups that wanted to adopt what's called the UK standards. The UK standards are from 1986, when maybe you were playing with your new Nintendo, with the Walkman, perhaps, around your ears. That wasn't the Speaker's type. But my point is, things have changed a lot since 1986. Scientific knowledge has improved vastly. The level of treatment of animals like at Marineland has gone much, much higher.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Tim Hudak:** I was a student at the University of Western Ontario, saying, "I kind of like that Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Brian Mulroney." You're right about that. Some things don't change so much; other things do.

**1610**

But, Speaker, seriously, there are 343 facilities with marine mammals in 63 different countries. Not one facility—not one single facility—uses that UK model. It's called the UK model because they actually implemented it in the United Kingdom, and guess what? Every existing facility closed down because the standards could not be complied with if you still wanted to actually keep the facility open and keep the lights on.

To their credit, those who are ideologically opposed to marine mammals or others in captivity are very clear. Dr. Rosen was one who spoke to this. He said, "In the case of the UK standards, they in fact did not close"—sorry: "They in fact did close down all the facilities in the UK"—let me read that cleanly. Dr. Rosen said, "In the case of the UK standards, they in fact did close down all the facilities in the UK, because they decided it wasn't worth operating under those standards, and their profit margins shrank to the point where they didn't think it was worth operating." So they all closed down.

Marineland says, "The only use of the UK model in the proposed standards is in relation to facility pool size." All other standards are CCAC standards. So if you want the park to stay open, you have to reject the UK model—which, by the way, is not active anywhere, because it closes the place down.

Dr. Rosen wrote us a letter. He couldn't appear at the committee. Dr. Rosen said that instead of adopting the UK standards, "It is my opinion that what is required is a set of standards of care based upon verifiable best practices, informed by quantitative data produced and analyzed in a scientific manner. Fortunately, such a 'natural experiment' already exists within the variety of facilities and marine mammal species currently held in aquariums within North America." He said, "This would provide the basis of a study of existing pool sizes and physical parameters measured against impartial criteria

of animal health and well-being. Such an objective approach, initiated and supported by the government of Ontario, would place the province in the forefront of animal welfare practices and serve as a model for other jurisdictions." Sounds pretty good—the government's own expert.

Mr. Nicholls, the member from Chatham–Kent–Essex, brought forth an amendment to do just so. Sadly, the government voted it down. They say that the UK standards are still on the table. I think that would be a mistake. By leaving it on the table, you undermine the investment in the community. You leave open the question: When they bring in the regulations, are they going to, by stealth, close the park down?

I do call upon the parliamentary assistant and the minister to reject the UK model, unless you want to close it down. Don't leave that question open—instead, a made-in-Ontario solution, as Dr. Rosen recommends, based on the latest scientific evidence and world-class standards, so we know that marine mammals at Marineland are treated the best anywhere in the world. Why won't we take this opportunity to do so? That's what we wanted, Speaker. Sadly, we didn't get it.

My last point—I know my colleagues want to speak to this—the third point: We brought forward an amendment to allow the minister, at his discretion or her discretion, under prescribed circumstances to allow Kiska, the last remaining orca, to have a companion. It is not easy being alone. This government's bill is a life sentence of isolation for that animal. We think that's wrong.

The first big-kid movie I took my daughter, Miller, to wasn't a cartoon; it was *Dolphin Tale 2*. A similar story: a dolphin in captivity in, I think, Florida, and they brought in another dolphin to keep her company, to make sure that her mental state was good. Why wouldn't we leave the door open at the minister's discretion to allow for a companion orca so Kiska does not spend the rest of her life isolated?

Some say, "Move her out." We heard evidence from the scientific community that that's not possible, given her age and state of health. The only other option is to allow a companion. I worry that the government, in this bill, without that amendment, could actually legislate criminal activity by forcing cruelty to animals by a permanent life sentence of isolation. I don't think that's your intent. I say to the parliamentary assistant and the minister: I don't think that's what you want to do.

It's too bad they voted it down. Our position was clear: world-class standards based on the best available science, a made-in-Ontario solution based on the CCAC work that was already done; number two, a humane amendment to allow Kiska the killer whale, under prescribed circumstances, to have a companion and avoid a lifetime of isolation; and third and finally, Speaker, to reject a back-door attempt to close the park down with the UK model, outdated from 1986.

They're closing them down in the United Kingdom. I don't want to see that. I want to see the best standards. I want to see people, including autistic children and those

from Make-A-Wish Foundation, enjoy a place like Marineland—the educational value—and to ensure that we have world-class standards right here in the province of Ontario. That was our point of view, Speaker. I'm sorry it wasn't theirs.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It is always my honour to rise in this House and speak about issues that matter to the people of Ontario. Today, I rise to speak on Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act.

When I rose to first speak to this bill, it was my first time speaking on an issue that falls under my newer critic portfolio, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and I am glad to again speak to this bill. The origins of this bill predate my time at Queen's Park, which shows you how long the changes have been needed. Regardless, I appreciate that changes are being made now.

The intention of this bill is to strengthen the existing protections for marine mammals in Ontario's marine parks and aquariums, as well as to provide new regulations for how large marine mammals can be observed or utilized for research. As members of provincial Parliament, we attempt to become educated on the various topics that we discuss in this chamber. But regardless of how extensive our research is, we are not the experts. Rather, we are representatives of the experts, and so I will bring some of the thoughts and submissions presented during committee.

Committee was interesting, but I will come to that. Let's look at the bill. The first few schedules of the bill deal with establishing new limitations around the selling, acquisition or breeding of orcas for captivity in Ontario; namely, the prohibition of all three. However, there are some exceptions that are also established within the bill. In section 3, subsection (1) states, "No person shall possess or breed an orca in Ontario." In subsection (2), however, there is a caveat established that, "Despite subsection (1), a person may continue to possess an orca in Ontario if the person possessed the orca in Ontario on March 22, 2015," or the day before this bill was introduced for first reading. The reason for this exception is Ontario's single orca in captivity, Kiska, who currently lives at Marineland.

Let me tell you a little bit about what I have learned about orcas. They are the largest whale kept in captivity. They travel the furthest and the fastest, and are uniquely unsuited to captivity. This is because there are unique challenges when it comes to keeping whales or dolphins, the biggest of which is attempting to replicate their natural environment. Orcas and other types of whales are also uniquely susceptible to stress, which can be amplified by a constrained environment.

It has been reported that the average life expectancy of an orca in captivity is roughly 40 years, which is how old Kiska is, incidentally. However, life expectancy in the wild—

*Interjections.*



**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Your own member is speaking, and you guys are all talking. It would be nice if you'd give her some leniency. Thanks.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Life expectancy in the wild is significantly longer. This is something that I raised during committee. There were different researchers, vets and experts who weighed in on life expectancy, and I didn't come away from the hearings with a definite number or age. What we do know is that Kiska's well-being needs to be taken into account by the government, and they need to consult with the experts to ensure that this is reflected in their actions.

Kiska has delighted families across Ontario for more than a generation. She has helped to put Marineland on the map. She is the face on T-shirts across the province. Arguably, she is the inspiration for this bill. We have learned a lot from Kiska. We have learned a lot from studies of cetaceans and large mammals in captivity, and that is why the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act has targeted its impact at orcas in captivity.

During committee, we heard from experts, passionate voices and business interests. It was a very emotional committee, and coming from a family of animal lovers, I understand and appreciate the importance of speaking up for animals. There were conflicting opinions, competing information and decidedly divergent recommendations. I appreciated the hearings and the process, but they did not clarify many things. Quite frankly, I can't imagine how the government can be so firm on some of their decisions without spending more time really consulting and researching.

1620

Some of the comments and recommendations that were presented in committee were to prohibit the importation into Ontario of all new wild-caught cetaceans because they, like orcas, have complex needs that can't be met in captivity. All of the submissions agreed on the importance of Kiska's best interests.

I'll be frank: We heard compelling stories and arguments on Kiska's behalf, and we know that this government felt compelled to create this bill when, honestly, there are so many other animal welfare issues across the province. They could have easily chosen a broader issue but they chose this situation. They chose Kiska as their focus. It was clear that the government had touched base with many groups but did not consult at length with them. We heard that, time and time again.

I don't know what is best for Kiska. I have not even met Kiska. I'm not an expert. But those who work with her, those who visit and love her, those who advocate for her and those who care about her ought to be consulted and a strategy should be designed. There really ought to be a long-term-care plan for Kiska, and the government needs to be a part of it.

I would like to read a section of a letter from Lynn Kavanagh, campaign manager from World Animal Protection Canada: "We applaud the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services in putting forward Bill

80 to prohibit the keeping of orcas and for establishing standards of care for marine mammals in captivity in Ontario. Decades of research have shown us that orcas don't belong in captivity. As Minister Naqvi has said, for far-ranging, fast-moving and deep-diving predators, captive environments cannot even come close to meeting their needs.

"Like orcas, other small cetaceans, such as belugas and dolphins, also have vast home ranges and, like orcas, are highly intelligent, extraordinarily social and behaviourally complex. These qualities and their corresponding needs mean these animals become stressed and suffer in captivity.

"Thus, World Animal Protection joins Zoocheck and the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies in the opinion that Bill 80 does not go far enough in its protection of marine mammals. We ask that the importation of wild-caught individuals of other cetacean species also be prohibited."

Certainly, the focus of Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, has targeted its impact to orcas in captivity, but the reach of the bill is far broader than that. Under this bill, the minister's regulation-making authority would also be expanded to include prescribing administrative requirements related to the keeping of animals, including the establishment of animal welfare committees, animal care plans, veterinary care programs and mandated record-keeping and disclosure, as well as regulating human activity around the care of the animal—not just what physically touches the animal.

The legislation would also amend the Animals for Research Act, which would allow the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, or the OSCPA, greater oversight over the condition of large marine mammals that are used in research. This includes providing inspectors the power to look at enclosures that the animal is not currently in but enclosures that the animal might be transported to or housed in regularly to ensure that anywhere an animal might spend time is up to the standard.

The amended act would also provide for the setting of regulations around the keeping of, care and use of other marine mammals such as walrus and dolphins. Regulations surrounding enclosure sizes, limits to sound exposure to animals etc. would all be strengthened.

As I mentioned before, I am not an expert. I might at one point have been a budding biologist—it feels like in another life—but the closest that I have been to a real whale was actually in Gaspé on a boat as a child. I have been fortunate enough to swim with dolphins once on a vacation, and I might actually be the only person to be bitten by a dolphin—true story. I might also, in fairness, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You got bitten by a dolphin?

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** I might have been bitten by a dolphin and I might, in fairness, have deserved it—totally deserved it—as I was pretending that my finger was a sardine. Anyway, those are the choices we make as 12-year-olds.

But I digress, Mr. Speaker. My point is, I'm not an expert, so I appreciate hearing from experts and people who can counsel the government and the research team when it comes to design and specifics.

In 2012, the government first announced its intention to address issues of animal welfare in Ontario. As we all know, this government doesn't exactly move too quickly with things—oh, wait, unless it's the sell-off of Hydro One in the budget. But anyway, it wasn't until 2013 that a panel was commissioned on the care and maintenance of marine mammals. The report of the expert panel was finally received the year following, in June 2014, and they reaffirmed the position of animal rights activists across the province that the current standards were, indeed, insufficient.

The report that the expert panel tabled, known as *Developing Standards of Care for Marine Mammals in Captivity and Recommendations Regarding How Best to Ensure the Most Humane Treatment of Captive Cetaceans*—or, for short, the UBC report—outlined expensive recommendations. There are 124 pages in total for the government to adopt. As additional background, a cetacean is “a mammal (such as a whale, dolphin, or porpoise) that lives in the ocean.” They are complex creatures with complex social interactions.

But back to the report: Some of the recommendations included requiring facilities that hold marine mammals to meet their physical and psychological environmental needs, requiring that facilities ensure that marine mammals are not harmed in their contact with the general public, and requiring that facilities must demonstrate commitment to the long-term care and well-being of marine mammals.

Speaker, to provide an overview of the issues that the expert panel was evaluating, I will read from the summary of the report: “There are several aspects specific to the aquarium environment that can potentially cause stress in captive cetaceans, although none are unique to this group, and most can be mitigated through proper husbandry and habitat design. The most critical issues identified are the need for adequate pool space and design, appropriate social groups, and environmental enrichment. Additional concerns relate to suitable light and sound exposure in the habitat.

“The relative survival rates of captive cetaceans in comparison to their wild counterparts seem to vary by species. However, there is an overall trend for wild-caught individuals to suffer higher rates of mortality during the capture process and upon the initial acclimation period in the facility....

“Studies have demonstrated that cetaceans show physiological responses to stress that are typical of other mammals, although the nature of the stress response varies considerably by species. Studies show that transport, arrival at a new facility, and the introduction of new ‘pool mates’ can cause acute stress in several species. Unfortunately, obtaining samples to monitor the health status of individual captive cetaceans can also lead to stress responses, although adequate training can reduce

these negative effects. Behavioural observations can be used as an alternate, inexpensive means to assess some aspects of animal well-being.”

These are fairly straightforward asks—common sense, one might even say. And regardless of the technical nature of the issue, we can all understand the need for increased regulations surrounding enclosures, interactions, etc. So we are pleased that these broad concepts are reflected in this bill, disappointed that it has taken so long to get here, and hope that the government will continue to consult more broadly to more effectively protect all animals in our province.

As I mentioned earlier, the biggest challenge when it comes to housing whales or dolphins is the challenge of trying to replicate their natural environment. It is different when we talk about terrestrial animals. We can expand as far as we have the land.

#### *Interjections.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I've got one individual blocking my view of the speaker. I've got four ministers having a group session talk. I've got five other groups talking. Even the third party is talking while their member is talking. It's pretty hard for the Speaker to hear anything, so I'd appreciate it that if you want to have group talks, go outside. Thank you.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I mentioned, the biggest challenge is trying to replicate their natural environment. To create a pool with enough space and depth for a whale—these are the finite constraints of a marine environment. Some of the primary issues that were raised during committee were around the specific proposed use of the UK standard relative to tank size and design. During committee there were significant concerns regarding these standards being adopted.

It's just so quiet after last night's midnight sitting that I—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** We can change that if you want.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** —can hear myself think today. It's such a shock, but I'll continue. And I appreciate people's enthusiasm for orcas and today's discussion.

1630

I would like to read part of a letter that my office received after the Bill 80 hearings from Mr. Bruce Dougan on behalf of CAZA. He said:

“I find the approach to the development of this bill to be rushed and improperly researched. The development of standards and guidelines for animals in captivity is a very complex one, with a need for specific criteria developed for a very unique Canadian set of challenges. The other nine provinces have addressed the issue of exotic animals in captivity and many are currently looking to enhance their legislation in this area and are waiting for the New Brunswick task force recommendations to be released prior to moving forward. Ontario is the only province that has done nothing provincially in this area, leaving this issue to the municipalities to



address. Currently there are 70 zoos in Ontario, with only 11 of these facilities having achieved accreditation.”

He continues: “I applaud the province for taking the initiative to develop standards for animal care; however, if the province is determined to go through with the guidelines and standards and a ban on orcas (and I believe that they will) then why not use a very thorough set of modern standards developed over the last 10 years here in Canada by the CCAC, not a set of standards developed 30 years ago by the United Kingdom that nobody in the world uses because they are unobtainable.”

I will continue with Mr. Bruce Dougan’s words: “As I mentioned to you, I have chaired a task force here in New Brunswick that is mandated to identify gaps and weaknesses in the current legislation, regulations and policies that led to the tragic deaths of two boys in 2013. There was very adequate legislation already in place, but our task took some nine months, comprised of weekly 78-hour meetings to reach a consensus on the recommendations, and this report has not yet been finalized and submitted. That is to say that the issue of a made-in-Ontario set of standards and guidelines will require the proper expertise, time and attention that it desperately deserves, and should not be fast-tracked.”

I would also like to share part of their submission to the committee and their thoughts on the development of these standards:

“As you may know, CAZA has long advocated that the government of Ontario address the policy, legislative and regulatory gaps that exist with respect to animals in human care.

“This is why, when Minister Naqvi indicated last January that the government would be introducing enhanced standards of care for marine mammals, we applauded his announcement.

“At the time, we expected to see unfold a process grounded in science and verifiable best practices that would begin to fix Ontario’s broken system.

“However, while we were grateful for the opportunity to participate in the development of these standards as a member of the technical advisory group, we had concerns from the outset with the timelines and scope of the exercise.

“Absent evidence of a current or imminent marine mammal welfare crisis in this province, we found the time frame as inexplicable as it was unfortunate....

“In summary, we applaud the government’s intentions, but believe that the approach chosen is flawed.

“We urge this committee to recommend a pause, and for the sake of the animals, that this important exercise be placed on solid scientific footing.”

Mr. Speaker, the CCAC standards are standards that are developed in Canada and held to be exemplary. The issue, as I understood it, as I gleaned from hearings, is that the CCAC standards did not define optimal pool size or dimensions. The government bill, however, sets out pool specifics and has based them on these 30-year-old UK standards.

I’m going to put this as clearly as I can, because it took me a while to understand this in committee, with so

many different experts weighing in on this. These UK standards are 30 years old, but really, the concern is not about how old they are. The concern seems to stem from the massive, nearly impossible to construct size and dimensions of this recommended pool. The UK standards have actually never been used anywhere, arguably because the cost and challenges of building to these standards would either be impossible or they would be financially nearly impossible.

Some voices at committee want the government to use these standards because they are the biggest, and then some said that it would be the ideal or the best. Others argued that it isn’t about the depth or diameter of the pool, but rather the design and complexity—for example, if a pool had areas for an animal to rub against. Others hoped that the standards would knock businesses out of the water, so to speak. Others asked for more reasonable standards that aren’t going to mean an end to their business viability. Quite frankly, it was a very deep issue, and people did not agree.

It was clear, however, that the government arbitrarily picked these standards because they thought they were the best, or it was the only standard that existed that had an actual number on the dimensions of the pool. They need to consult with those who would know whether or not bigger is better, or the biggest is the best. That seems to be what would be fair, and that also seems to be what would be proactive, not just reactive.

I will share with you from a letter submitted by Dr. David Rosen of the Marine Mammal Research Unit at the University of British Columbia. Dr. Rosen co-authored the report *Developing Standards of Care for Marine Mammals in Captivity and Recommendations Regarding How Best to Ensure the Most Humane Treatment of Captive Cetaceans*. This report recommended the adoption of the Canadian Council on Animal Care, or CCAC, guidelines as a specific standard of care for marine mammals. His thoughts on the arbitrary adoption of the specific UK standards are as follows—actually, he had mentioned in the CCAC report the reason they didn’t have specific standards on pool depth: “First, such a specific recommendation was outside of the scope of the report. Second, insufficient scientific information exists on which to base any quantitative evaluation.”

He goes on the say, “Unfortunately, in the 30 years since the report by Klinowska and Brown”—also known as the UK report—“insufficient research has been undertaken to make such decisions on a scientific basis. This does not mean, however, that such an approach is not possible. It is my opinion that what is required is a set of standards of care based upon verifiable best practices, informed by quantitative data produced and analyzed in a scientific manner. Fortunately, such a ‘natural experiment’ already exists within the variety of facilities and marine mammal species currently held in aquariums within North America. This would provide the basis of a study of existing pool sizes and physical parameters measured against impartial criteria of animal health and well-being. Such an objective approach, initiated and

supported by the government of Ontario, would place the province in the forefront of animal welfare practices and serve as a model for other jurisdictions.”

In addition to some of the concerns that I’ve mentioned, there are other ways that this bill comes up short. I’ve already touched on the fact that this bill took a matter of years to come to fruition, but in its current form, there are still areas for improvement, primarily in terms of enforcement.

Currently, Bill 80 would only allow the OSPCA to apply to the courts to remove a marine mammal in contravention of the act if a facility fails to do so themselves, rather than having the ability to enforce the act directly. Subsequently, this would permit the continued or potential mistreatment of animals, as any sort of lengthy court application process, wait time or extended case could immensely draw the process out.

As well, I noted earlier that the bill permits a six-month period when prohibited animals can be brought into the province temporarily before being removed, which the government, hopefully, can elaborate on.

As always, the legislation remains vague in areas about how the OSPCA’s powers will be extended. Unfortunately, that wasn’t sufficiently clarified during the committee stage.

Speaker, I will finish up by thanking the minister for the opportunity to speak on this bill. Like I said, I didn’t expect this to be the first bill that I would speak to in my new critic role for community safety and correctional services, but it is an important topic, and I have appreciated the chance to learn and to share my thoughts. The priority of this bill must first and foremost be increasing protections and standards for marine mammals in our province, and though it is imperfect, I believe that this goal is reflected in Bill 80.

This is about setting minimum standards. The closer these minimums are to best practices, the better, but we do need to guarantee a minimum standard of care for all animals in captivity. We hope this bill will do that, but we do hope that the best practices, after consultation with the experts, actually are the best. Currently, too many things are left up to inspector discretion on what is adequate or appropriate, so minimums must be quantifiable and enforceable if the intent of this bill is going to be realized.

I appreciate that some—some—of the relevant experts and stakeholders have been consulted and included through the process, but we hope that this government will continue to regularly and thoroughly consult on issues of animal welfare with them.

1640

Ultimately, New Democrats support the intentions of this legislation, and I am pleased to support Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I rise to speak to Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act.

This is a strange bill because it’s really about one animal, a killer whale at Marineland in Niagara Falls named Kiska. The killer whale is now in her late thirties, and the Toronto Star has raised numerous concerns about her health and whether she’s getting good care. I want to make a point that Marineland disputes these allegations.

It’s an example of the government introducing legislation to address a media story rather than introducing legislation to provide good government. We believe that animals should get good care. We believe that they should be protected, but we also believe that the government should have done more with this bill.

This bill prohibits orcas, or killer whales, from being bred or brought into Ontario. It makes it sound like this is a growing problem but, in fact, last year there were no orcas brought into Ontario or bred here. The bill also prohibits orcas from being held at research facilities in Ontario, but again, there are currently no orcas in research facilities. In fact, animal activists are upset because if this bill passes, it will result in Kiska being alone for the rest of her life. Even Bob Barker, the former host of *The Price Is Right*, contacted the Premier to ask that Kiska not be forced to spend the rest of her life alone. It’s an example of what happens when the government introduces legislation to respond to a media story rather than trying to make good policy.

This bill is a missed opportunity. If the government is prepared to make amendments to the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, then let’s help more than one animal. Let’s make a change to the legislation so it does a better job of protecting all animals. As it stands, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act isn’t working for farm animals or farmers.

In a letter to the minister three years ago, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario said, “The CCFO firmly believes that animals deserve to be treated with kindness and respect during the entire production cycle and is adamant that animal neglect or cruelty has no place in Ontario’s livestock production. However, the current approach towards inspection and enforcement has led to an unacceptable situation, with widespread distrust and fear among producers which must not be allowed to continue and requires a new approach.”

That letter was more than three years ago. It asked the minister to consult with Ontario’s livestock sector and other interested parties and develop policies that work. Three years later, we haven’t resolved the problems for Ontario’s livestock, but we have a bill for one killer whale.

Too often, we hear stories of inspectors who don’t have sufficient training going onto farms. They aren’t large animal vets and they don’t understand farm protocol. We wouldn’t send a vet used to dealing with cats and dogs to deal with killer whales; neither should we send someone without the right training to deal with farm animals.

Several years ago, a Chesterfield dairy farmer, David Robinson, was charged with 12 counts of animal cruelty



by the OSPCA for having malnourished Holstein cows. However, from reports, it sounds like the issue was more that the inspector didn't have sufficient knowledge of farm animals and older cows. Two local veterinarians said the animals were not underfed. In fact, one of them said that the OSPCA order to increase the body fat score to 2.5 in a 17-year-old cow was like asking an 80-year-old man to look 25.

There are instances where there are real problems. We unfortunately had one of those incidents in Oxford a few years ago, when a farmer was no longer able to care for his cows. They had been neglected and had to be removed. In those situations, we need people with proper training. We need people who can both recognize the problem and who know what action is needed to correct it.

If this bill were to ensure that we had more people like that, it could make a significant contribution to animal welfare.

Another issue the government should have addressed in this bill is biosecurity. Biosecurity on our farms is hugely important, especially when we are dealing with diseases such as PED and avian influenza. When we're trying to stop the spread of a disease from one farm to another, it isn't acceptable for an OSPCA inspector to go from one farm to another without taking biosecurity measures such as washing their truck. If an inspector doesn't have farm training, when a farmer asks them not to enter the property after being at a neighbour's, it sounds like they're being difficult. But the reality is that the farmer is likely just trying to protect the animals against disease.

This bill would have been a good opportunity to ensure the standards for proper training for OSPCA inspectors dealing with farm animals. Instead it is a bill that addresses one investigative series of media articles and one killer whale.

One of the issues related to biosecurity is that of requiring warrants. When the inspector needs to get permission to enter the property, there is an opportunity to talk about the need for things like a truck wash, foot wash or boot covers. There's an opportunity for the farmers to explain their biosecurity protocol that the inspectors should be following.

Too often the government introduces legislation that creates exemptions where warrants are not required. In fact, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Ontario Immigration Act, which is also being debated by the Legislature, both provide this exemption. Warrants are necessary, not only to protect the rights of individuals, but also to protect against issues like biosecurity on our farms and to ensure that when there is a real problem, the case isn't thrown out of court on a legal technicality. Too often we have seen the OSPCA take cases to court only to see them thrown out.

This bill was an opportunity to make some real changes that would create a better system and better protection for animals and their owners. But it's an opportunity that the government missed.

One of the other challenges that this bill should have addressed is the fact that the OSPCA has to raise money to fund operations. I remember a few years ago when there was a charity walk in Toronto. Despite the fact that there were numerous trails in the city, the participants were sent on a route along busy streets. When one of the participants asked why, she was told, "Trees don't donate." Well, Mr. Speaker, we have a real concern that the OSPCA could operate in a similar way. Headlines and publicity encourage donations. This bill could have created more separation between the charity and enforcement, but instead we are focusing on one single whale.

The killer whale is not the only animal facing health issues. If this government truly cared about animals, they would be doing a better job of investigating the causes of mortality in our bee population. The government has been focused on one potential cause without really investigating the impact of other problems. We know that the bee habitat is disappearing. We know that there are mites that could be causing bee mortality. What we don't know is the impact of those factors on our bee population. If this government cared about animals, they would be looking into the causes of bee mortality to make sure that the action they take is going to solve the problem. Instead they are causing hardships for our grain farmers without knowing whether that is the solution and that it will protect bees.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill, and I wish that the government had chosen to do more with it. I also wish we were focusing on bigger issues rather than spending all our time on a bill that only protects one whale: issues like the misuse and waste of social housing money at the Housing Services Corp. when we have a list of 168,000 families who need affordable housing. Each year, we have set a record for the number of families waiting for affordable housing, and yet the government continues to allow money to be wasted on items like trips to Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I recently sent out a survey to every household in my riding as part of my newsletter. I didn't receive one single response asking for this legislation. I didn't receive one single response that said, "We need to do more to protect killer whales."

1650

What I received were responses from people who were worried about a proposal to locate a landfill site on fractured bedrock near the Thames River. That landfill would impact a lot of marine life, so maybe it should have been addressed in this bill. As I've mentioned repeatedly, it would also put our drinking water at risk. One of Ingersoll's wells is located only a short distance from the site, and that is not an acceptable risk.

I also received responses from people who were worried about wind turbines and the impact that they would have on the health of their community. I received numerous responses from people who were concerned about the increasing cost of hydro and the cost of the proposed pension plan—but again, not a single response asking for this bill.

I hope that, moving forward, the government will address more of these issues that are causing hardships and having a real impact on my constituents and the people across Ontario. I appreciate them introducing this bill, and we will be supporting this bill, but much more needs to be done to protect all animals in the province of Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rick Nicholls):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to yet again have a chance to speak to this. I know that the bill has gone to committee. There have been some amendments brought forward. I've heard some really good comments on the part of all members of the House who had something to say about this.

I think, in the end, we understand that Marineland is a viable business. It provides a great service to the people of the Niagara region. It's a place that we can bring our kids and where we can enjoy ourselves. Trying to deal with this entire issue in regard to how we deal with whales in captivity is, obviously, a sensitive one, depending on what side you're on, and I'll let people speak to that.

I just want to take this opportunity to say, and I said this in the second reading debate, that one of the things that I think we really need to think about—and I know we could have done this in this bill and, unfortunately, we didn't—is to take a look at tourism from a bit of a different perspective and to say that there are whales to be seen in Ontario that are not at Marineland. They actually live in the wild in Ontario. I know most members of the assembly now know this, because I've said it before, but, Mr. Speaker, there be whales in Timmins—James Bay and in Kenora—Rainy River. We have belugas up in Hudson Bay and James Bay. One of the sad things is that, as a province, we have never looked at how we are able to deal with tourism, and trying to do it in some way that is ecologically viable, to be able to see whales in their environment.

Some of us have gone to British Columbia and Alaska, or have gone to the Maritimes and to the St. Lawrence, to see whales in the wild, in their own environment. It's a majestic thing to see. I'm flabbergasted when I see whales in the wild, because it really makes you feel insignificant as a human being, being such a small person on this very big planet and sharing it with animals or mammals that are as big as they are. They're quite something to see.

I think one of the things that we could have done is said that there needs to be some sort of task force or committee or ministerial directive, or whatever you want to call it, that would say, "How are we able to develop other opportunities for tourism in Ontario where we have things like beluga whales that are natural to the province of Ontario?" so that we're able to say that the times when belugas are active—and it's a very short window. It's not all the time; let's recognize what this is. They tend to go by—well, I saw this here, and I'm going to come back to that in a minute. It's a short period of time that belugas

are able to be viewed, and there's a fair amount of work that has to be done for you to be able to see that, because they are not exactly hanging out next to shore. They're at the mouth of the river. You have to build some infrastructure so that people can actually be at the mouth of the river to be able to see these wonderful creatures in the wild.

The other creatures we see are seals. There are seals at the same time, within the mouth of the river. Why are they there? It's a natural cycle of feeding. There are all kinds of—how would you say it? The water rushing down into James Bay from the ground, coming back, is washing in all kinds of feed that the whales and seals are eating at that particular time of the year. That's why they are there. At the same time, you've got polar bears.

There's certainly a way that I think you would be able to say, "Okay, let's figure out ecologically how we're able to put in place a mechanism by which people are able to see this with the proper type of infrastructure," so that we can give young people in this province, and older people like myself, and new grandfathers like you—congratulations, by the way.

I just want to take one second to say something that was said to me some years ago by Bruce Crozier, who was a member of this assembly a number of years you would know. Our first grandson wasn't born yet. We were still waiting for the delivery of our first grandchild; we didn't know if it was going to be a boy or a girl. Julie, our eldest daughter, was three or four months to due date, and I remember Bruce coming to me, and I said, "Why are people making this big fuss about grandkids? I just don't get this." He looked me square in the eye and said, "Listen, Gilles, it will change your life. You just wait until your first one is born, and your life will be changed." And I can tell you, it is a life-changing event. There's nothing that makes *mémère* and *pépère* Bisson happier than one of the grandkids walking in the door, and if they don't walk in the door, guess what? *Mémère* and *pépère* are going over there to knock on their door, because we want to be part of their lives.

I congratulate you and your family because it is really the thing that completes the cycle of life. I know other members in this House are in the same, and it's just quite something. I know you yourself—so you know what I'm talking about.

So to Bruce Crozier, our dearly departed friend, I just want to say, man, was he right on that particular note.

But back to whales: My point was, we should be looking at ways of being able to encourage ecotourism to see whales in the wild. For example, some of the infrastructure is there. Some of you have come to James Bay and you've had a chance to stay at the Eco Lodge. The last time that I had this talk, I said the number was 705-658-6400 if you want to call and book yourself at the Eco Lodge. It is a wonderful establishment built by the McCreebec First Nation community, a non-status reserve where they have a number of commercial enterprises that they utilize to pay for infrastructure and run themselves as a traditional band. They do it in the sense of a



traditional band. It's not an Indian Act band; it's actually a traditional band, which is quite something—amazing leadership there over the years, with people like Randy Kapashesit, who is since dearly departed from us—a visionary leader—and other people like Allan and others who are there.

They have an Eco Lodge that they built, an eco-lodge where you can go and stay. You can make arrangements to get out on the bay to see the whales and the seals, and to go onto the land and experience what the Mushkegowuk Cree lived for centuries and for millennia on the James Bay coast. There's not enough of that out there. Quite frankly, even organizations like the Eco Lodge need to have some support to develop that infrastructure and the marketing necessary to attract the tourists to come, because build it and they will come.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** A train going from Toronto to northern Ontario would be a novel idea.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** A train going from Toronto would be great. We do have the train going from Cochrane in my colleague's riding that goes all the way up to Moosonee. It's still owned by Ontario Northland. So it's there; we haven't lost it. And guess what? The tracks are still there from Toronto to Cochrane, so putting the train there would be great.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** And the people are still in Toronto.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** People are in Toronto. We say that in joking, but it's serious. We never did look—this is the problem that we had with the ONTC closure. Governments and successive governments never did what they could have done with the ONTC, and that is to say, how can we utilize the train and how can we utilize this infrastructure to build economic activity that allows us to generate revenue that lessens the dependence on a subsidy that the province has to give? There will always be subsidy on trains. There's not a train in the world that runs without subsidy. The government has admitted that the amount of money we have to invest into infrastructure to provide that infrastructure is quite expensive. Then, once you run it, you've got to subsidize it. GO Transit, TTC, Timmins Transit, none of that would run if they didn't have some kind of subsidy.

I think when we look at tourism, we need to actually look at the question of how we support ecotourism so that there are other ways for people to see animals in the wild or mammals in the wild, and in the case of Marineland, which I've been to as our kids were growing up and went through there—a wonderful facility where our kids got to get up close to animals they see on television but they never get to see in person. I'm sure most members of this assembly have gone through there with their own children or their grandchildren. It's an amazing experience.

The other experience we need to look at is how we promote ecotourism in different parts of the province that allows people to see what is natural, in the wild, in our parts of the province that we live in. I think there's opportunity there. In itself, is it the silver bullet that will

resolve the economic issues in all of those communities? No, but I can tell you this: I've travelled around the world, as a lot of members in this assembly have, and it's amazing to what degree tourism can play a very big role in the economy. It's amazing what people will come to see. For example, a number of you—who's been to Thailand?

*Interjection.*

1700

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh, there we go. If you go to Thailand, 40 years after the movie *The Bridge on the River Kwai* came out, people still travel—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Forty years? It's 58 years. It was 1957.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh my God, it's 58 years. How could it be that old? I was born in 1957. I remember that movie. I must have seen the rerun, then.

But my point is: 58 years later, people are still going to the town where the bridge on the River Kwai was built. And guess what? When you get there it isn't the original bridge because it was blown up and was eventually rebuilt. It fell apart, and they put a new bridge in. But there is a bridge there.

When I went with my brother, some years ago, there were literally hundreds of people from around the world who got off buses and taxis and everything else to be able to say, "I got my picture taken on the bridge on the River Kwai."

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I see that my good friend from Nipissing actually went and did that.

I'll give you another one in Thailand that I think is equally amazing, for those of you who have gone. It's not just the bridge on the River Kwai; it's the water markets in Thailand. All it is is water, the Chao Phraya River, which runs through Bangkok. There are people who, for centuries, have been living along the river and their houses are built beside the river. Hundreds and hundreds—I would say thousands—of tourists flock to Bangkok to see the housing and the living that has gone on for centuries along the Chao Phraya River. My point is that they are showing what it is that they have—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** In North Bay we have the shadfly river.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What was that? We have the shadfly river. Very good heckle; I appreciate that.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** While I really appreciate the travelogue, as you two are travelling the world together, I'm not quite sure what that has to do with orcas. But you can continue.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I guess I still have lots of work to do. It has to do with seeing nature in the wild. It has to do with ecotourism. It has to do with not being flabbergasted by a Speaker who I have to explain that to again and talking about—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Actually, don't be flabbergasted, for heaven's sake. Secondly, you don't have to explain to me; I've seen the movie several times, and I do believe it's a bridge, not a whale. Thank you.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Yes, the bridge on the River Kwai. That was funny. That was a better heckle from the Chair than you can get from the benches.

But I have to say: What was underneath the bridge on the River Kwai?

**Interjections:** Whales.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Snakes. One of the worst places for poisonous snakes in the world is in that area around the bridge on the River Kwai.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Well, there are some red vipers over there.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** There's a viper sitting right over there. I love these types of debates. People should be here and have to pay admission to see this; it's actually pretty funny.

The point is, there is something we have to do when it comes to being able to say to people, "You don't just have to go to Marineland to see animals. You can actually go into the wild to be able to see what is there naturally."

The other thing I just want to say very quickly as we go through this particular debate: I understand why certain people in this province have decided that they have to go the direction that they did within this bill. I think there is a certain amount of compromise that has happened throughout this process. I don't think everybody is going to be really happy with the final outcome, but you know what? That's unfortunately, or fortunately, the way it works. Sometimes compromise means that both sides aren't terribly excited and completely happy. But I think, nonetheless, that people tried their best on committee—people who came to present. I think the members of the committee tried to take into—not consent, but—

**Ms. Catherine Fife:** Consideration.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:**—consideration the amendments that were brought forward. I think that what has come forward to us now at third reading is certainly a little bit better than it was when it was at second reading. Again, I just say congratulations to the members who did that.

The last thing I would say, because I promised somebody I would say this, is that certainly one of the problems the whale has at Marineland is that when they buy electricity, it's kind of hard to pump water at off-peak times. So we all know that the electricity they have to pay at Marineland—it's getting harder and harder to pay that bill at the end of the month. Now that the government is privatizing Hydro One, can you imagine what that says to the cost of being able to run Marineland when it comes to the pumps and heaters and lights and all the stuff you have to run at Marineland to make it happen? So it's going to be—

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** It'll be a whale of a bill.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You know, that's what I like about you. You're clairvoyant; you read my mind. I was going to end on this: It would be one whale of a bill that people are going to have to receive and have to pay at Marineland after we privatize Hydro One.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the time that we've had in debate. I appreciated your com-

ments and your heckling me from the chair. It was really good, and I appreciated it, and please continue the good work.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** The member from Chatham—Kent—Essex.

**Mr. Rick Nicholls:** Thank you, Speaker. On a serious note, it is my pleasure to rise today and to speak once again to Bill 80, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015.

A lot has changed since the second reading of this bill, but in a way, absolutely nothing has changed. In committee, we introduced seven amendments that were designed in an effort to ensure that the contents of the bill matched the spirit of the bill. We wanted to ensure that the standards of care for marine mammals are based solely on science, not ideology. Understanding that future changes in regulations could have a direct negative impact on the economy of Niagara Falls as a whole, as well as other areas, we asked the government to note and mitigate adverse economic impacts where possible. Even the NDP voted against this amendment, and they represent Niagara Falls.

A critical concern for us was amending the bill to require that OSPCA agents get proper certification to work on marine mammals, which are incredibly diverse and complex, and also to have a veterinarian present on inspections. Finally, we tried to provide a Kiska clause, where the minister would have the ability to allow a companion orca to live with Kiska, if the minister deemed it appropriate from an animal welfare perspective.

Each and every amendment that we, the PC caucus—our team—brought forward was shot down by the Liberal and the NDP members of the committee, who had clear marching orders: "Vote down anything that's a PC amendment." I might add, too, that the government and the NDP did not bring forth any amendments at all. We were the only party to do so.

Before I move forward with the rest of my remarks and get into some of the amendments specifically, I want to take us back in time, all the way back to 1986, and there's a reason for this. Back when IBM released the first laptop, it weighed an astounding 12 pounds. It was nowhere near as powerful as the smartphones that fit in our pockets today. The Nintendo entertainment system in 1986 was released in North America, and if you recall, Speaker, cellphones had to be carried around in bags—great big bags, probably weighing anywhere between 12 and 16 pounds. They were huge; they were heavy; they were monstrous. This was modern technology back in 1986, ironically the same time period as when the UK standards of care that the government is using as a foundation for the new marine mammal care regulations—that's when they were developed: back in 1986. As we can tell, technology has come a long way. But these standards haven't.

These standards are as old as Betamax and about as widely used. Numerous experts came forward through the short public consultation process and expressed their concerns. These scientists and industry experts called on



the government to commit to basing their standards of care on the best and most up-to-date information available instead of the decades-old UK standards. Even Dr. Rosen, whose report was supposed to be the basis of this legislation and future regulations, called for the new Canadian Council on Animal Care, known as CCAC, standards to be adopted instead of the decades-old UK standards.

The report stated, in no uncertain terms, “We recommend the timely adoption of the Guidelines On: The Care and Maintenance of Marine Mammals established by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) as a specific standard of care for marine mammals under the OSPCA Act.”

1710

Sadly, Speaker, the government refused to make that commitment. And it could have had—and it can have, in fact—some grave consequences. Dr. Haulena is the chief head veterinarian at the Vancouver Aquarium. He’s also an adjunct professor of clinical sciences at North Carolina State University and an adjunct professor at the University of British Columbia’s fisheries science centre. In his expert opinion, it is illogical to expect to be able to implement standards developed in the 1980s for bottlenose dolphins to other marine mammals, and this would be detrimental to the quality of care received by these animals.

Dr. Haulena stated in committee, “Developing a standard for a bottlenose dolphin that now has to be, just with the mathematical model, expanded to a beluga whale or to a porpoise or to any other species is just impractical, unreasonable, unscientific and, from all we know, impossible.”

The UK standards have not been adopted anywhere in the world because they are outdated impossible to implement. If the government adopts these obsolete standards, they will cause a substantial loss of economic activity in the Niagara region. The outcome would be the closure of Marineland as well as other aquatic facilities. If that is this government’s end goal, they should be up front about it and let the region know what the economic impact of these decisions will in fact be.

Mr. Wayne Thomson, a councillor representing Niagara Falls Tourism, stated that the Marineland provides 700 jobs directly, but, more importantly, 36,000 related jobs—not only in Niagara Falls but in the entire region. It generates millions of dollars in economic activity each year and Marineland provides \$4.5 million annually in regional advertising. Closing the facility would come with a tremendous loss to the people of Niagara Falls.

Why would the NDP vote against our amendment, which would safeguard Niagara Falls and its region from the unintended consequences of this bill? Don’t they care about the region’s economy?

Even more important than the financial cost of allowing this bill to go forward without amendments is the potential harm to animals if we fail to address massive problems of the OSPCA. Yesterday, I went on to the OSPCA’s website to see if there were any job

postings for inspection agents. Well, guess what? I found a posting for an agent, so I looked at the requirements. I assumed that a relevant degree in biology, or zoology, or relevant professional experience must be required. I was shocked to learn of the actual requirements. This is a quote from what we found on the Internet, on the job posting: “The successful candidates will possess an OSSD or equivalent and post-secondary education in police foundations, law and security education, or animal enforcement.” So, Speaker, all you need to become an OSPCA inspector in Ontario is a high school diploma and a degree that is completely unrelated to animal biology, or science at all, for that matter.

If you’re currently in grade 12 and you haven’t taken any science courses beyond the bare minimum required to graduate—hopefully you can still graduate this year, after the mess the Liberals have made of the education file—you may be qualified to apply as an OSPCA agent without taking any additional science courses in college. If, for example, you take police foundations right out of high school, you can become a qualified OSPCA agent even before you turn 19. That is absolutely shocking.

It also raises some alarming issues regarding abuses of power, as well as concerns over animal well-being. This raises some alarming issues in regards to safeguarding animal welfare in Ontario. How can you honestly expect people without a proper background in marine mammal care to be able to properly assess the well-being of these incredibly diverse creatures?

OSPCA officers, overall, are very passionate and hard-working. They do their best to protect animals in this province. But they simply cannot be asked to uphold standards across such a diverse range of animals without proper training or certification. The status quo means that agents are going to miss out on clear signs of distress that a finely trained eye would catch.

That’s why we introduced an amendment that would require OSPCA agents to be certified before they inspect marine mammals. Our amendment read that “an agent or inspector of the society may enter and inspect a building or place where marine animals are kept only if he or she has been certified with respect to marine animals in a manner deemed appropriate by the minister responsible for the administration of this act.”

This amendment would give the power to the minister and the ministry to determine appropriate certification standards for inspections and for inspectors. This was a realistic amendment. We did not ask for certification to inspect dogs, cats, horses, cows, birds or any other animals. We simply asked that agents conducting inspections on marine mammals be certified to do so. We felt that this was a reasonable amendment to move, that it was a very constructive amendment and one that simply made common sense.

Common sense did not prevail, as again both the Liberals and the NDP felt it was unreasonable. They believe that inspectors should not be certified when inspecting some of the most unique animals on the planet. They feel that a black-and-white checklist is sufficient when it

comes to detecting stress or health issues in animals that inspectors may have never seen before. This is a disservice not only to the OSPCA agents, who are expected to be jacks of all trades; this is a disservice to the animals that inhabit Ontario.

Many animal rights advocates have watched debate and committee hearings of this bill closely, and I really hope they're watching right now. If you're watching this debate and you're concerned about marine mammals in Ontario, you should ask the government why they don't want people who are tasked with ensuring that standards of care are enforced are even certified to deal with marine mammals.

Another serious concern that we have is the unnecessarily rushed manner in which the government has chosen to deal with this complex matter. Bill 80 was introduced just over two months ago, and it's wrapping up debate on third reading with time allocation. It was before committee for only a couple of days, and stakeholder groups who will be providing input over the summer for the new standards of care for marine mammals are claiming that the government is limiting their time to study this issue.

Bruce Dougan, who was the head of New Brunswick's task force looking into exotic animal regulations, stated in committee that the government is unnecessarily rushing the advisory process compared to New Brunswick, which took the better part of a year to do research and hold consultations. Mr. Dougan said that "we have hoped to see the government opt for a rigorous review of options to enhance the level of care and well-being of marine mammals rather than a mad dash to an imaginary finish line."

Instead, we are seeing this Liberal government place a priority on scoring political points. This is a scientific issue, not a partisan issue. By placing unnecessary time constraints on the consultation process and voting against good-natured amendments designed to promote animal welfare, this government has jeopardized the well-being of animals that it is claiming to protect.

Many times during clause-by-clause, I asked the government to "go slow to go fast." But no, they wanted to rush right through it. They want to do what I call a Phi Slama Jama.

1720

As many bills are currently before the House, they want to get those bills through before we break for summer. Why? Because they can, without giving the proper consultation needed to do it right—a made-in-Ontario solution, as my colleague Mr. Hudak had indicated.

Sadly, Bill 80 represents a missed opportunity to get it right. For that reason, I cannot and we will not be supporting this bill.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate? Further debate? Last call for further debate? Seeing none, Mr. Naqvi has moved third reading of Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care.

All those in favour, please say "aye."

All those opposed, please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*Interjection.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Pursuant to standing order 28, they request that this be put over until after question period tomorrow.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** I move that notwithstanding any standing order or special order of the House, there be a timetable applied to the consideration of certain business of the House as follows:

(a) Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities

When Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities, is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That following the completion of its consideration of Bill 66, the Standing Committee on General Government shall next meet at its regularly scheduled meeting for up to two days of public hearings and one day of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 9; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 9:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—The deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on the last day of public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day following the last day of public hearings on the bill; and

Following the completion of the second hour of clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the Committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments



thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 19, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

(b) Bill 37, An Act Respecting Invasive Species

When Bill 37, An Act Respecting Invasive Species, is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Social Policy; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on Social Policy shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days of public hearings and for up to two days of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 37:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—The deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on the last day of public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional

day following the second day of public hearings on the bill; and

Following the completion of the second hour of clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

On the second day of clause-by-clause consideration, the committee is authorized to meet from 6:45 p.m. to 11:59 p.m., for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration;

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the last day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 37, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

(c) Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest

When Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest, is next called as a government order, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on Justice Policy shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second

reading of the bill, meet for up to two days of public hearings and two days for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 52:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—The deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on the last day of public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the day following the second day of public hearings on the bill; and

Following the completion of the second hour of clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

1730

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the last day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 52, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill, apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

(d) Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin

When debate on Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin, reaches 6.5 hours, or when the member who has the floor at that point has completed his or her remarks, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of the second reading stage of the bill without further debate or amendment and at such time the bill shall be ordered referred to the Standing Committee on General Government; and

That the vote on second reading may be deferred pursuant to Standing Order 28(h); and

That the Standing Committee on General Government shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days of public hearings and for up to two days of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 66:

—Notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire; and

—Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis; and

—Each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

—The deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on the last day of public hearings; and

The deadline for filing amendments to the bill with the Clerk of the Committee shall be 12 noon on the sessional day following the last day of public hearings on the bill; and

Following the completion of the second hour of clause-by-clause consideration, those amendments which have not yet been moved shall be deemed to have been moved, and the Chair of the committee shall interrupt the proceedings and shall, without further debate or amendment, put every question necessary to dispose of all remaining sections of the bill and any amendments thereto. At this time, the Chair shall allow one 20-minute waiting period pursuant to standing order 129(a); and

The committee shall report the bill to the House no later than the sessional day following the last day on which the committee met for clause-by-clause consideration of the bill; and

That upon receiving the report of the committee on Bill 66, the Speaker shall put the question for adoption of the report forthwith, and at such time the bill shall be ordered for third reading, which order may be called that same day; and

In the event that the committee fails to report the bill on the sessional day following clause-by-clause consideration, the bill shall be deemed to be passed by the committee and shall be deemed to be reported to and received by the House, and shall be deemed to be ordered for third reading; and

When the order for third reading is called, two hours shall be allotted to the third reading stage of the bill,



apportioned equally among the recognized parties. At the end of this time, the Speaker shall put every question necessary to dispose of this stage of the bill without further debate or amendment; and

The vote on third reading may be deferred pursuant to standing order 28(h); and

That, in the case of any division relating to any proceedings on the bill, the division bell shall be limited to five minutes.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Mr. Naqvi has moved government motion number 40. Mr. Naqvi.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Thank you, Speaker. I'm just going to catch a little bit of a break. It was a long motion but an important motion, nonetheless. Thank you for indulging me while I read through the motion. It was a good exercise for me to read to my son when I do, so that I don't trip on words and I'm able to read to him in a concise fashion. But this will definitely put him to sleep if I read this motion to him when I see him tomorrow night, so perhaps I should consider that.

Speaker, I would like to speak to the programming motion that I just tabled before the House and currently up for debate. The pieces of legislation that are contained within this motion are extremely important and we must move forward with them in this House. Collectively, they represent a part of our government's plan to build Ontario up.

The bills are as follows: Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities; Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species; Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest; and Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. I would like to speak to the significance of each of these bills individually to provide context as to why we need to move forward with this programming motion.

The people of Ontario, last June, gave us a strong mandate. They are expecting us to take action on helping to strengthen our economy, to invest in modern infrastructure and to support our essential services.

Firstly, Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities, was introduced in July 2014. In the past, Ontario's coal-fired power plants cost the people of Ontario an estimated \$4.4 billion per year in health, environmental and financial impacts. Because of the leadership of this government, Ontario's elimination of coal-fired electricity is the single largest greenhouse gas reduction initiative in North America. It is the equivalent of taking up to seven million cars off the road. It's like taking seven million cars off the road. This act, if passed, would ensure the health and environmental benefits of prohibiting coal used for electricity generation in Ontario are now protected by legislation.

Next is Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species, which was first introduced in February 2014. This bill

represents our action to address the serious threat of invasive species to Ontario's economy and to our natural environment. Currently, there is a patchwork of more than 20 federal and provincial acts, none designed specifically to deal with invasive species. This proposed legislation will help address the legislative gaps.

If passed, the Invasive Species Act would be the first stand-alone legislation of its kind in Canada. It would complement the role of the federal government in managing invasive species and it would promote shared accountability for managing invasive species in Ontario.

Next is Bill 52, which is An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest. This is a bill that I have been working on for quite some time, and I had the great privilege of introducing it as a private member's bill back in October 2012.

This bill, which was introduced by the Attorney General as a government bill, is proposing a made-in-Ontario approach to addressing the issue of strategic lawsuits based on consensus recommendations of an expert advisory panel and extensive stakeholder consultations. Using intimidation tactics to silence one's opponents is a misuse of our court system. By protecting citizens against strategic litigation, our government is protecting the right of Ontario residents to speak out on matters that are important to us.

If passed, this legislation will allow courts to quickly identify and deal with strategic lawsuits, minimizing the emotional and financial strain on defendants, as well as the waste of court resources.

Lastly is Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. The proposed Great Lakes Protection Act is designed to protect and restore our Great Lakes so they are drinkable, swimmable and fishable. The proposed Great Lakes Protection Act has been strengthened to help fight climate change, protect wetlands and other coastal areas, monitor and report on the health of the lakes, and bring people together to take action on priority issues.

**1740**

The proposed act builds on Ontario's leadership in protecting the Great Lakes, including our Great Lakes Strategy and partnerships with Canada, Quebec and the Great Lakes states. Speaker, it also builds on actions we are taking to reduce harmful algal blooms, promote environmental stewardship and help local communities take action.

The Great Lakes are vitally important to the people of Ontario for our drinking water, quality of life and prosperity, not to mention that the Great Lakes very much define our beautiful province. We need to restore them now, to continue to enjoy their benefits for this and future generations.

Speaker, as you can see, these four bills are very important for the long-term prosperity of our province. They represent our plan to invest in people, build strong infrastructure, and support a dynamic and innovative

business climate across Ontario. It is a list of bills on which you will find wide consensus within the Ontario public in general, and I hope that all parties will support these bills as well.

I would like to provide some context of what this Legislature experienced in the last Parliament. The opposition parties needlessly stalled important bills that would have made a difference in the lives of Ontarians. From the time our Premier came into office, up until the election in June, because of the opposition parties' stalling, we were only able to pass 36% of our bills.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** You have a majority.

**Hon. Yasir Naqvi:** Our government was given a majority mandate to deliver on our promises—exactly the point that the member from Nipissing is making—and that's what we are doing with these four important bills.

Speaker, we look forward to debate and discussion on it, and we look forward to moving on with these bills. I hope that the members from all parties will see the merit of these four bills, because they do impact all our respective communities. They are important for the well-being and sustainability of our environment and the future prosperity of our province.

I hope members will support this programming motion, because it will allow us a very defined, clear pathway, moving forward, to ensure that we, in due time, pass these four bills into law for the future prosperity of our province.

Thank you for your time, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Wow. That's all I have to say to that: Wow. You just listened to not even an eight-minute speech by the government House leader. This substantive government programming motion, number 40, was a four-page motion. I think he took more time reading the motion than he actually did explaining the government's intention on this substantive motion.

What really frustrates me with this government House leader and this government is that a year ago, we were in the middle of an election. The election took—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Don't remind me.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm sorry to bring it up again, member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. I know you went through extensive therapy after that last election. You're doing well, buddy. I'm proud of you.

Listen, we came back here on July 2 and we were subjected, I guess—now I can use the word—to a throne speech that used words like, "This government is going to choose partnership over partisanship." That's what they said in July. Yet, in reality, this government, when it comes to its legislative agenda, could barely get a bill passed in the fall. In fact, they didn't want to have hearings at all across the province. They didn't want to hear from opposition parties. Then we have a government that came back here after Family Day in February and essentially said to the third party House leader and myself, as the official opposition House leader, "We wanted to hear from you. We wanted to hear what you had to say about

bills. We wanted to work a little more collaboratively across the aisle on getting through government legislation."

You know what happened, Speaker? Over and over and over again, we've seen the government House leader present closure motions. I think I've quoted the chair of cabinet, the member for St. Catharines, probably dozens of times so far. When he was in opposition talking about closure and time allocation motions, he used the words "choking off debate." Well, I tell you, when I read this four-page motion, they're not trying to choke off debate; they're trying to negate debate between the opposition. They're trying to program the life out of Ontarians and give them little or no opportunity to be able to provide input on government policy.

All of these bills, almost every one—that eight-minute vignette from the government House leader talked about Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities; Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species; Bill 52, An Act to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act in order to protect expression on matters of public interest; and Bill 66, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin. All of these bills, every single one in this four-page motion, were brought up at a House leaders' meeting where the government said to our party and the New Democrats that they wanted to sit down and "How can we move these bills forward?"

We were very honest. I remember the third party House leader, Mr. Bisson, and I having a conversation with the government House leader about having some of these bills travel throughout the province, having maybe people in northern Ontario—I know that my leader, Patrick Brown, values the opinions in the north. In fact, he went up to the north last week on break week with the member for Nipissing. He went to the Ring of Fire. He hadn't been leader for more than two weeks, yet he decided that going up to the north and hearing northern voices, to be able to meet with people, to be able to listen to people, to be able to hear that northern perspective, was important.

You read this substantive motion, which is what we have to call it procedurally—it doesn't provide any substantive travelling of this province. It doesn't provide us with any opportunity to meet with people in northern Ontario, or quite frankly—the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke and I live in eastern Ontario. We happen to think that this government shortchanges us when it comes to organizing committee hearings in our part of the province.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Rarely see them.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** There are members here from southwestern Ontario from our caucus that rarely ever see a committee of the Legislative Assembly coming.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I'm not sure whether the minister responsible for francophone affairs is talking about



hearing from francophones in the province. This bill cuts that off, too. I hope that in the 52 minutes that the government left on the table, maybe she would want to talk about how we can improve this substantive motion, if that's what we're going to call it, so that we can actually hear from all Ontarians, regardless of what language they speak or where they live in this province.

This motion provides very little debate outside of this bubble at Queen's Park. I made a speech right after we came back in February about the Premier using the term that she's going to govern from the "activist centre." Well, I often think that when she says that, she means Queen's Park, because that's the only place that there seems to be any legislative activity. This government shuts down debate on a regular basis. This government, using the words that I've quoted many times from the chair of cabinet, chokes off debate. This is not just choking off debate; this is assassinating debate in the province of Ontario. This provides little or no opportunity for any Ontarian to have a chance to talk about these bills.

The government House leader—it's quite surprising that he can only muster up eight minutes of debate to talk about some very substantive bills. Let's talk about this substantive motion for a few moments. Let's let Ontarians really know how valued the Wynne government feels about hearing from the public.

1750

So you've got a bill that they like to talk about a lot, which is Bill 9, An Act to amend the Environmental Protection Act to require the cessation of coal use to generate electricity at generation facilities. This is a bill that the government loves to talk about. They love to throw it in the opposition's face. And yet, when they really get a chance to hear from Ontarians about their priority for this bill, here's what they provide. I'll read you an excerpt from this motion number 40:

"Following the completion of its consideration of Bill 66, the Standing Committee on General Government shall next meet at its regularly scheduled meeting for up to"—how many days, Speaker? Guess how many days. Two days. Two measly days, one of which is going to be for public hearings and one day for clause-by-clause of this bill. That's all they care about.

And do you know what, Speaker? Here's how they're going to engage Ontarians, to ask them what they feel about Bill 9—whether they support Bill 9, whether they want to come and give testimony at one of these few days of public hearings. Wow. This is really going to get out there to the public. They're going to put a notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire. I just want to say that that is all the government is willing to do.

There are so many other opportunities that this government has to promote its hearings. I know I've been a vocal critic of the government. We have committee hearings that don't get streamed live. We don't make that investment to make sure that all of our committee rooms

have live-streaming capabilities so that we could show these hearings. We didn't used to archive anything when I first got elected; we archive a smidgen of information on our website. To me, that is the bare minimum. In fact, it's laughable that we're going to take a four-page motion and on the very first bill have just three opportunities.

The other thing I take umbrage with—and I know there are many members who have been here much longer than I have—is this section that says, "Witnesses are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis." For new members who were just elected in last year's election, there was a convention around this place where parties would choose, on a rotational basis, people who would come before committees. For whatever reason, this government House leader has it in his mind that it's going to be on a first-come, first-served basis.

I can tell you, Speaker, that when I get done my address, I'm going to give the government a freebie. At one point during my time—and it looks like my time will extend over to the next time this bill is called—I'm going to change that section. I'm going to propose an amendment for (a), (b), (c) and (d) to change that. I firmly believe that if we are going to put partnership ahead of partisanship, when we choose those groups and individuals who are going to appear before committee, we should do it on a rotational basis, so that the government can choose someone, the opposition can choose someone and the third party can choose someone. I think we've been able to do that. We just did it with the bill that was debated this afternoon. Bill 80 was debated this afternoon on another programming motion—no big surprise with this government; they're the experts on programming, time allocation and closure.

I think that their chief government whip, who's very skilled with a computer and technology, should probably write a little column for some of the area papers. Maybe we can post it on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly's website and Canada NewsWire. That's just a suggestion, Speaker, through you to the chief government whip, that maybe he could start working on that. We could put that up and let all the Legislatures of Canada know the skill that this government has in providing time allocation of substantive motions and issues of closure. Maybe we could call it—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** They're freezing the public out.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** That's right: They're freezing the public out.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** They're freezing the public out of the process.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** That's right. Even with climate change, they're freezing the public out.

The other thing that I, again, question is the fact that in this motion—and I think it's the case through all four sections—witnesses have five minutes each for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members. So in a committee that meets for four, five or six hours, if you start chewing up 14 minutes per person, you're only going to have a handful

of people. I think there were some bills that this government has put forward for their time allocation where they've had maybe six, seven or eight people who have even been allowed to make presentations, because, again, they don't provide the days required to be able to debate these bills.

A five-minute presentation and nine minutes between the parties for questions and comments, quite frankly—and I'm being kind to the government—is an absolute joke.

You've got one day where basically you're going to get less than a dozen people who are going to be presenting. To me, that does not constitute having a dialogue with Ontarians.

Go back—don't take my word for it—to the throne speech. Go back, go online and read it yourself—and don't even take any of these substantive motions, time allocation motions or the closure and the ending of debate that this government has done. Just read the words that were spoken by the Lieutenant Governor in this chamber. You would think that Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of the province, and the government House leader would go out of their way to meet with Mr. Bisson and I, as the two opposition party House leaders, to try to work these out.

For some of these bills, we were very clear that we were willing to work with the government, that we were willing to sit down. There were some bills that I felt needed to have some committee hearings outside of this Queen's Park environment. There were some bills that Mr. Bisson felt needed to be travelled.

The second bill that's part of this motion, Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species, is moving after some of these other bills are passed. It's only going to have two days for public hearings and up to two days for clause-by-clause, so four days—that's it—for a bill that I would suggest would have a lot of public comment.

I know in my area invasive species—there are some of the farm groups. I can't tell you how many times I've had a meeting with a farm or a farm group where I've talked about bobolinks or I've talked about Blanding's turtles. Heck, I have Highway 15 in my riding. Part of the reason why it was delayed by the Ministry of Transportation was because of the grey rat snake and the Blanding's turtle. The ministries couldn't even talk between each other. They couldn't talk between the Ministry of Transportation and the Ministry of Natural Resources. I had to try to broker a meeting just to try to get these two groups together so that we could get construction of the road. That's just one example in my riding. I've got many more, and I'm sure my colleagues, if given the opportunity, could flood the floor of the Legislature with issues in their ridings and concerns about invasive species.

Regardless of whether this bill is good or not or has all-party support, to be able to say that you're going to stay here at Queen's Park for two days of public hearings and two days for clause-by-clause—again, they're carbon copies of each other. The only way that people are going to find out about these hearings is through the Ontario

parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly website and Canada NewsWire.

I'm not suggesting that this government spend the money that they're spending on Pan Am advertising during the Stanley Cup hockey game. That was unbelievable, some of those commercials last night. I can't imagine how many millions of dollars this government spent on Pan Am advertising—or OLG advertising, actually, as well. I know, Speaker, you're one of the critics who are involved here—he's giving me the eye.

I could stay all night, Speaker, if you want. Are you adjourning the House? What are you doing?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** I will be in one minute.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Well, I'm going to take more than one minute. So you just let me know when I'm done and I'll pick it up the next time—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** Okay. You're done.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller):** This House stands recessed until 6:45 tonight.

*The House recessed from 1759 to 1845.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ONTARIO IMMIGRATION ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'IMMIGRATION EN ONTARIO

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 27, 2015, on the motion for the third reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 49, Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** My understanding is that when we last debated this bill, the member from London-Fanshawe had the floor. I recognize her to continue her debate.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Speaker, I'll just continue where I left off.

We keep talking about the shortage of skilled workers in this province, yet what concrete steps is this government taking to address this serious concern in Ontario's labour force? We must continue to attract skilled workers in order to address this long-term economic challenge. We must also do better at recognizing the credentials of immigrants coming to Ontario. When immigrants are unable to use their skills and have not had their home country education recognized, their contributions to the Ontario economy cannot be fully appreciated. Legislation that is informed not only by our own economic and labour market needs, but by the needs of those who will aid us in achieving our goals—those who are not just



looking to Canada and Ontario for employment opportunities but for a future for their own families while becoming a member of ours.

One of the more important provisions in this bill is that it confers new powers to the minister to conduct research, organize educational and training programs and appoint committees on immigration-related issues. This is a step in the right direction for Ontario. We need to do our homework to get the facts right. That requires education and research.

I am also eager to see that this bill established a registry for both employers and recruiters who are interested in participating in an Ontario selection program under the OIA. This provision does fall short on requiring employment agencies and recruiters to register. I did introduce a motion in committee to have replaced the current definition in the act of “recruiter” to include the definition of “immigration consultant,” but unfortunately, the motion was defeated.

New Democrats wanted to make sure that if and when—when, Speaker—a registry of recruiters and employers utilizing nominee and other foreign worker programs is established in the province of Ontario, if you hang a shingle out as a recruiter or consultant or employer and you offer these services, your participation in this registry becomes mandatory.

New Democrats remain concerned that workers in this province, whether born here or just arrived, enjoy protections and rights—not only the universal rights and protections we all should expect but, where appropriate, protections specific to the circumstances in which they work. That’s a piece—a big piece—of the need for immigration legislation in Ontario, and now the Ontario Immigration Act. So we’d like to acknowledge that the government members of the committee did the right thing in passing this amendment.

The creation of the registry is a good idea, and I believe that its membership should be mandatory for any person or business claiming to be an immigration consultant. We also put forward another amendment that would allow the minister to publish the names of foreign entities that participate in the registry if they are found to be in violation of requirements of the registry. That’s because there are big recruitment entities that are multi-jurisdictional. These are simple accountability measures which we feel strengthen the act.

New Democrats heard from constituents on what’s good, what’s not so good, what’s missing and what could stand to be improved. We heard again from groups in committee, and we sought changes through amendments to the bill to ensure that there were at least some teeth in the act. If you represent yourself as a recruiter or immigration consultant—or employ temporary foreign or migrant workers—and you’re active in Ontario and you take advantage of those workers and their families looking for opportunities here, then you should be prosecuted and prevented from operating again in Ontario.

1850

Let’s ensure that this registry becomes a reality. Right now, that’s not clear. We must strive to protect the immi-

gration process by creating a clear path to immigration that is accountable.

There are some good opportunities for settlement service organizations who have been offering direction and aid to those who come here for a better life, with information and language services. There are provisions in the act that give me hope that the ministry will provide much-needed funds to these groups for the work that they are doing now.

But increasingly, the skilled workers who come to Ontario need to be seeking out opportunities in Ontario, and many of them are heading to western provinces and out east. By giving them some certainty, by developing, as I’ve called it, a made-in-Ontario immigration system, Ontario can continue to benefit from the rich contributions of immigrants and immigrant communities to the province for generations to come.

Thank you, Speaker, for the opportunity to speak to this bill. I look forward to the questions and comments.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** A point of order, Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Yes, I’m prepared to recognize the member for Windsor-Tecumseh on a point of order.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Thank you, Speaker. I beg your indulgence. I’d like to introduce a friend of mine visiting Queen’s Park this evening. Joe Bachetti is the deputy mayor of the town of Tecumseh. He’s a high school principal, and he’s in town for a policing conference. Welcome to Queen’s Park.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Welcome.

Questions and comments?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I thought I would just thank the member for her positive comments and talk a little bit about what the Ontario Immigration Act would do.

It will formally recognize the long history of immigration to Ontario and the important nation-building role it has played in forming Ontario’s social, economic and cultural values.

If passed, the Ontario Immigration Act would position Ontario as a full partner in immigration with the federal government, giving Ontario a framework in which to design, deliver and manage a larger and more complex selection program. Certainly, one of the aggravations in the immigration system historically is the fact that Ontario really hasn’t had the opportunity to partner fully with the federal government in immigrant selection.

Ontario needs to be well positioned so that it can take full advantage of the express-entry immigration system that Ottawa introduced in January 2015. This is important because an enhanced role in immigration selection may help Ontario increase its percentage of economic-class immigrants.

If passed, the act, as the member noted, would introduce the regulatory framework to respond to Ontario’s responsibilities in the immigration system, and support transparency, accountability and consistency in the province’s selection programs.

It would also, if passed, provide the ministry with the necessary tools to protect the integrity of Ontario’s

selection program and help protect potentially vulnerable applicants from the risk of program fraud. We've heard so much, over the years, about immigration fraud. It's really important to have the tools to deal with that and to help the many, many legitimate immigrants who want to gain entry to Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments? The member for Nipissing.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Thank you very much, Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to speak at this hour.

My grandfather came to North Bay—obviously, an immigrant. He came to North Bay from our family's community in Italy. Today, there are more Italians from our area of Reggio Calabria in North Bay than there are residents of Reggio Calabria in the home city. It's amazing. They came over—

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** There are a lot of Calabrians in Guelph.

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** Almost every Italian in North Bay is from Reggio.

My grandparents are from Santo Stefano. They came because it was a land of opportunity. In my community of North Bay, at one time, there used to be three railroads: Ontario Northland, CN and CP. They came to build the railroads. Highways 11 and 17 intersect in North Bay, so there were highways to build and railways to build. My grandfather went to work for the department of highways, as it was known back then. Years later, he brought his family over, which included my mother's older brother and other relatives, but my mother and some of her other brothers and sisters were born in North Bay.

It's just one of those stories, as we begin to, next week, celebrate Italian Heritage Month. I'm looking forward to raising the Italian flag here at Queen's Park next week, because we really do have a rich history. Yes, in the past, the Italians were the labourers. They built the buildings. Today, they are the doctors, the lawyers, the engineers, the designers, the entrepreneurs—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. Victor Fedeli:** —the MPPs, all through Ontario. So we take great pride in talking on behalf of my Italian community and Italian Heritage Month starting in June.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I just want to say that obviously we're going to be supporting this bill. I appreciate the comments made by our colleague.

This is not really what we should be doing. Ontario should do what Quebec has done and take over a large part of the responsibility for immigration in this province. Ontario is the Mecca by which everybody comes. The largest percentage of people who are immigrating to Canada come to Ontario. We've always argued, as the Conservatives have, that in fact Ontario should take the responsibility for immigration because there's a number of settlement issues that we have to deal with.

We look at where most people end up immigrating to. They end up immigrating to the large urban centres. But as my friend from Nipissing-Renfrew-whatever—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Pembroke.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** —Pembroke knows, and people in Timmins-James Bay and others, there are a number of places out there where our communities could be host to immigrants coming into our communities.

I look at where I come from. There's a number of skilled tradespeople and a number of technical jobs that need to be filled in the mining and forest industry, within the retail sector, within the service sector. It's difficult at times to be able to find the people to fill those jobs. So it's very important that we look at that.

The other thing I just want to comment on really quickly—I mentioned this the other day in the House. I was listening to the honourable House leader for the government talk about his experience as a 15-year-old moving to Canada, a new immigrant here. I said it at the time and I'll say it again: We take it for granted, but Canada—and Ontario—is such a great place that people can immigrate here, they can make their life here. They're accepted, they can run and they get elected as members of provincial Parliament. We have people in this House who come from different parts of this world. It's just who we are as Ontarians.

I just think it's so important that we recognize that the diversity of Ontario is the strength of Ontario. I think this Legislature has a way to go, but it's becoming much more diverse as the years go by. I look forward to a day where we have real representation from all of the communities across this province, including First Nations.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** We have time for one last question or comment.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It gives me great pleasure as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade, and as an immigrant myself, to stand in this House once again and speak on Bill 49, the Ontario Immigration Act.

Before I get into talking about why it's important that we have this piece of legislation pass, I just want to address some of the comments that the member from London-Fanshawe spoke about earlier this morning in indicating that we were not complying, as the ministry, with the Auditor General's report. I just wanted to provide some clarification for her, to say to her that the AG herself has said that the ministry has already taken action to address the issues before the report, that we have even finished addressing those issues, and that we have taken action on all the recommendations that the Auditor General has made. Once we pass Bill 49, we will be sure to continue the work that is necessary to address all issues.

One other thing that the member did indicate was that the minister was not available to ever speak to her or to brief her on anything going on, and that it would have been nice for the minister to have reached out to her. Well, Mr. Speaker, I have here a call log of about five or six different dates in which the minister's staff did reach out to the member opposite to speak to her and to brief her on this particular bill. No response was ever received,



or she was never available. I just wanted to make sure that we were clear on that and that she wasn't misdirecting this House.

Mr. Speaker, I'm here to speak to you about the—

*Interjections.*

1900

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I believe I heard an inappropriate, unparliamentary remark, and I would ask the member to withdraw.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I respectfully withdraw, Mr. Speaker.

The Ontario Immigration Act, if passed, will formally recognize the important role immigration has played in the history and development of our province and the key role that our immigrants play in our economy.

Mr. Speaker, if we pass this piece of legislation, our Ontario Immigration Act is definitely part of our plan to invest in people, support the sectors to boost the economy, and invest in Ontario.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** The member for London—Fanshawe has two minutes to respond.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** First of all, I'm probably the last person who would ever mislead this House—I'm just saying. That is the last—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Honest Abe.

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** Yes. Actually, I really take that as a personal comment, but I understand you withdrew, so I'll be the bigger person and let that go, as I always would stay above the fray.

The Auditor General's report was very serious in nature, identifying a lot of issues with regard to process and training and retention of employees. So I reach out to the minister, and I would love to hear what those solutions are, and I'll follow up with that.

I'll have to check Hansard, because I don't recall saying that I never heard from you at all. But I will check Hansard.

This morning, I did, in jest, speak to the Minister of Tourism and Culture, who was here. It was a jest; we were speaking in jest. I don't know if you mistook that.

Anyway, back to the bill, because that's what we're here about. We're here to talk about the bill, not about personal issues.

When I'm speaking about the bill and the Auditor General's findings, I am happy to find out how you improve the situation so that you can actually have processes that will deliver the bill that you've presented in a way that's going to accomplish the outcome of what you proposed.

I did say as well, early this morning, that I commended the committee, the members of the government, for passing the two amendments that we proposed, out of 13. They were very important amendments. One of them that they agreed to was that we struck out the language "and that is not a foreign national". They agreed to that, which was great, because if we left that language in, Speaker, it just meant that the bigger recruiters wouldn't be held accountable. That was a very important piece.

The other one they also agreed to was about, actually, moving subsection 29(1)—and they struck out and substituted the word "Offences".

That was very important, and I thank the government for that co-operation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Further debate? The member for Parkdale—High Park.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Here I am.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Is it okay? Might I speak?

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** Sorry?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** I thought there might be some revision. But, yes, you have the floor.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's always an honour to speak in this House and particularly to speak about immigration. All of us, of course, are immigrants, and we stand here on First Nations land, and it's important to acknowledge that. As immigrants, we all have our stories that we bring to the table. So as we discuss this, we have to take into account that we're not talking about "them" or someone other than ourselves; we're talking about us, and we're talking about our families and what countries they've come from, whether they're first-, second-, third-, or 10th-generation Canadians.

In my particular case, my father was born here, but his family came from Italy. My mother's family came from England and Ireland. She was born here as well, out on the Prairies. Their stories of immigration really formed me, and I think our parents' stories of immigration really formed them.

My father—very classic. I was listening to the other member talk about his Italian heritage. My father's family owned a fruit and vegetable stand on the Danforth. You can't get more Italian than that. They said that during the Great Depression—I never knew my grandparents on that side—at least they ate. I remember growing up with that story. Other people weren't so lucky. Because they had a fruit and vegetable stand on the Danforth, they actually had food, so they were some of the lucky ones.

On the British side, who grew up on the Prairies and homesteaded out there, my grandfather was the only doctor in miles and miles and miles, and my grandmother, with four little children at home, would go days and days without seeing him. She would tell stories of seeing him coming home on the horizon, a day before he got there—that's how flat the land was, looking out—and of how she would be stuck at home with these four little kids and without a whole lot of support: coming from Great Britain, where she was one of 12, a very Victorian family—coming from this huge family, to being stuck on your own, with little children in the middle of nowhere, with your husband always somewhere else.

Those are the kinds of stories that really form our character and form our being. In fact, that is in part, I think, why we are all here: because we are the products

of that and we're proud of that. We do ourselves a disservice to not remember the hardships as well as the good times.

I also grew up on stories of my father, as an Italian immigrant, being told—he was a semi-pro boxer—that he could walk in the back of a certain club—I won't name the name—but he couldn't walk in the front door, when he fought for them, because he was Italian. That was part of our heritage as well.

He told me of the boardwalk in those days. He remembers a sign that said "No Jews or dogs allowed" on the boardwalk in Toronto, in the Beach. He remembers the Christie Pits race riots, where neo-Nazis came and fought. This is all from the 1930s. This is all part of our heritage.

I kind of long to read, Mr. Speaker, that real history of the peoples of Ontario—the bad, the good, the sad, the glad. Sometimes those moments have really formed us too. Certainly, on this side of the House, in the New Democratic Party, our strong sense of necessity for social justice comes from our parents too, and from their hardship, from what it was like for them to grow up in a society that wasn't as accepting, that wasn't as multicultural, that wasn't as inclusive. That was the reality.

I remember, as a little kid, growing up in an English-speaking household for the most part, and going to Huron Street public school in downtown Toronto, which was by far—again, it wasn't a chi-chi area. It wasn't expensive back in those days. It was rooming houses. My parents ran a rooming house. Those big, gorgeous Victorians on Bedford Road were rooming houses; they were student housing back in the day.

Walking to Huron Street public school—it was a multicultural extravaganza by Toronto standards back then, but we only had one kid of colour in the entire school. There weren't many kids of colour back then. I didn't even know that she was a kid of colour. I mean, this is children, Mr. Speaker. It's really wonderful to look back on my experience and think I didn't have consciousness of difference in that way. I remember skipping with her in the schoolyard, and a photographer caught our picture, myself and her skipping together, and that became the poster. We became the poster children for Christians and Jews, the society of Christians and Jews, who were promoting multiculturalism, and we got to have lunch with the then mayor, Nathan Phillips. We were the multicultural poster children—me, a white kid, and her, a kid of colour—and there we were. We didn't even know why they would take our picture. That kind of innocence and naïveté was quite beautiful.

I also remember being invited back to the house of one of my school friends after school, and his mother—I think I was seven or eight at the time—offering me a little shot of wine—very Italian, much more Italian than my family. I thought, "This is bizarre." For a white British kid to be offered a shot of wine at the age of seven or eight was quite something in those days.

Again, these early multicultural experiences, which, when you look back on them, they're sweet, they're innocent, they're not so sweet, they're not so innocent. They're all of the above, and that's what forms us.

I'm being told by my House leader that I can now can it, so I will, reluctantly—because, of course, you know politicians: When we get a microphone, we could go on. I will cede the floor, then, to the powers that be, so that we can all go home.

Thank you, and here's to multiculturalism.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Questions or comments? No questions or comments?

Further debate? Further debate?

Mr. Chan has moved third reading of Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes would have it.

Call in the members. This will be a 30-minute bell.

However, I have received a notice of deferral from the chief government whip, asking that the vote on third reading of Bill 49 be deferred until tomorrow during the time of deferred votes.

*Third reading vote deferred.*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Orders of the day? I recognize the chair of cabinet and deputy House leader.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** Much as I was looking forward to sitting until midnight tonight, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the House.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott):** Mr. Bradley has moved adjournment of the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it. Carried.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1911.*



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenant-gouverneur: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York–Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Sarnia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough–Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa–Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwal, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales Premier / Première ministre Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones

**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonnell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short



## La francophonie

M. Arthur Potts .....	4668
L'hon. Madeleine Meilleur .....	4668

## Pan Am Games

Mr. Todd Smith .....	4669
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4669

## Visitors

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4669
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4669

## DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

### Agriculture Insurance Act (Amending the Crop Insurance Act, 1996), 2015, Bill 40, Mr. Leal / Loi de 2015 sur l'assurance agricole (modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte), projet de loi 40, M. Leal

Third reading agreed to .....	4670
-------------------------------	------

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4670
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4670
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4670
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4670
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4670

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

### Multiple sclerosis

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4670
-----------------------	------

### Multiple sclerosis

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4670
-------------------------------	------

### Asian Heritage Month

Ms. Soo Wong .....	4671
--------------------	------

### Liberation of the Netherlands

Mr. Tim Hudak .....	4671
---------------------	------

### Multiple sclerosis

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4671
----------------------------	------

### Ehlers-Danlos syndrome

Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4671
------------------------	------

### Neurofibromatosis

Ms. Ann Hoggarth .....	4672
------------------------	------

### Beef Farmers of Ontario

Mr. John Vanthof .....	4672
------------------------	------

### Member's grandchild

Mr. John Fraser .....	4672
-----------------------	------

## REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

### Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4673
Report adopted .....	4673

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

### 1476263 Ontario Inc. Act, 2015, Bill Pr22,

Mr. Hudak	
First reading agreed to .....	4673

### Ethnic Media Week Act, 2015, Bill 105, Mr. Smith / Loi de 2015 sur la Semaine des médias ethniques, projet de loi 105, M. Smith

First reading agreed to .....	4673
Mr. Todd Smith .....	4673

### Protecting Condominium Owners Act, 2015, Bill 106, Mr. Oraziotti / Loi de 2015 sur la protection des propriétaires de condominiums, projet de loi 106, M. Oraziotti

First reading agreed to .....	4673
Hon. David Oraziotti .....	4673

## MOTIONS

### House sittings

Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4673
Motion agreed to .....	4674

### Correction of record

Mr. John Fraser .....	4674
-----------------------	------

## PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4674
------------------------------	------

### Long-term care

Mr. Grant Crack .....	4674
-----------------------	------

### Ontario Disability Support Program

Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4674
--------------------------	------

### Off-road vehicles

Mme France Gélinas .....	4675
--------------------------	------

### Water fluoridation

Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4675
-----------------------	------

### Wind turbines

Mr. Jim McDonnell .....	4675
-------------------------	------

### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4675
-------------------------------	------

### Credit unions

Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4676
-----------------------------	------

<b>Automotive industry</b>	
Mr. Joe Dickson.....	4676
<b>Hydro rates</b>	
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4676
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Mr. Wayne Gates.....	4676
<b>Soins de longue durée</b>	
M. Grant Crack.....	4676
<b>Landfill</b>	
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4677

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015, Bill 80, Mr. Naqvi / Loi de 2015 modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario, projet de loi 80, M. Naqvi

Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4677
Mr. Bas Balkissoon.....	4678
Mr. Tim Hudak .....	4679
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4681
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4685
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4687
Mr. Rick Nicholls .....	4689
Third reading vote deferred .....	4691

### Order of business

Hon. Yasir Naqvi.....	4691
Mr. Steve Clark.....	4695
Debate deemed adjourned.....	4697

## ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

### Ontario Immigration Act, 2015, Bill 49, Mr. Chan / Loi de 2015 sur l'immigration en Ontario, projet de loi 49, M. Chan

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4697
Hon. Liz Sandals.....	4698
Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4699
Mr. Gilles Bisson.....	4699
Mrs. Cristina Martins.....	4699
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong.....	4700
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4700
Third reading vote deferred .....	4701



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Wednesday 27 May 2015 / Mercredi 27 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

#### Time allocation

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4647
Mr. Steve Clark .....	4647
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4648
Motion agreed to .....	4649

#### Ontario Immigration Act, 2015, Bill 49, Mr. Chan / Loi de 2015 sur l'immigration en Ontario, projet de loi 49, M. Chan

Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4649
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4650
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4657

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4657
Ms. Catherine Fife .....	4657
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4657
Mr. Monte McNaughton .....	4657
Hon. Jeff Leal .....	4657
Ms. Lisa MacLeod .....	4657
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4657
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	4657
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4657
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4657
Mr. Peter Z. Milczyn .....	4658
Mr. Jim McDonell .....	4658
Mme France Gélinas .....	4658
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4658
Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4658
Mr. John Vanthof .....	4658
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4658
Mr. Bill Walker .....	4658
Mr. Mike Colle .....	4658
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4658
Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4658
Hon. Mitzie Hunter .....	4658
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4658
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4658
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4658
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4658
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4658

#### Wearing of carnations

Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4658
--------------------------------	------

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4659
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4659
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4659

#### Hydro One

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4660
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4660
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4660
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4661

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4661
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4661
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4661

#### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4662
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4662

#### Hydro One

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4663
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4663

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4663
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4664

#### Pan Am Games

Mr. Glenn Thibeault .....	4664
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4664

#### Winter highway maintenance

Mr. Victor Fedeli .....	4665
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4665

#### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4666
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4666

#### Greenhouse gas emissions

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4666
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4666

#### Ontario Drug Benefit Program

Mr. Michael Harris .....	4667
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4667

#### LGBT conversion therapy

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4667
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4667
Hon. Yasir Naqvi .....	4668

*Continued on inside back cover*

HAZON  
X1  
-D23



No. 89

N° 89

ISSN 1180-2987

## Legislative Assembly of Ontario

First Session, 41<sup>st</sup> Parliament

## Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Première session, 41<sup>e</sup> législature

# Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

# Journal des débats (Hansard)

Thursday 28 May 2015

Jeudi 28 mai 2015



Speaker  
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk  
Deborah Deller

Président  
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffière  
Deborah Deller



### **Hansard on the Internet**

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

### **Le Journal des débats sur Internet**

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

### **Index inquiries**

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

### **Renseignements sur l'index**

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

---

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services  
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building  
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430  
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation  
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement  
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A2  
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430  
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday 28 May 2015

# ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Jeudi 28 mai 2015

*The House met at 0900.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

*Prayers.*

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 27, 2015, on the motion to apply a timetable to certain business of the House.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Further debate?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I just want to acknowledge that I'll be sharing my time with the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

I also want to correct my record from yesterday. In my enthusiasm about dissecting this bill, I had a bit of confusion between invasive species and endangered species. I wanted to acknowledge that I did make an error.

Actually, there is a parallel with this four-page programming motion, because there are some endangered species here at Queen's Park. One of them is a travelling committee, a committee that actually has province-wide hearings. In the old days, you would have a bill that would travel extensively around the province. You would go to all corners of the province to actually ask citizens what they thought of a particular piece of legislation. But I have to tell you, Speaker, since this Parliament began, that is all but an endangered species in this area.

What is also an endangered species is the words that this government said in its throne speech, the fact that they would put partnership above partisanship. Over and over and over we've seen motions similar to this; we've had a plentiful crop of closure motions—time allocation motions.

So there are endangered species in this Legislature: the rights of individual MPPs to represent their ridings, to be able to have meaningful input at the committee process and to be able to have meaningful input to provide amendments to bills that actually reflect what our constituents and the province of Ontario want in legislation. It's all but extinct, to use a phrase from the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change when he talks about the planet and extinction. Our rights as members are increasingly being diminished by this government. Again, this four-page substantive motion that programs bills is the icing on the cake of this government saying one thing and doing something completely different.

As opposition House leaders, we sit at meetings every Thursday at lunchtime—myself and the third party opposition House leader—and we talk about trying to co-operate. We talk about bills that the government would like to move forward. There are some bills in this substantive motion that we've agreed could have a few days of hearings and move forward. But there are some bills that we require, because of the constituents we represent, that they have a far more substantive opportunity to go around the province and get input from people in all corners of Ontario.

Yesterday, I talked about the leader of my party, Patrick Brown, and the fact that, right after he was elected leader, he decided that the north was a priority and decided to go up with the member from Nipissing to look at the Ring of Fire. Not one—not one—of these bills that are part of this substantive motion is going anywhere north of the committee room on the first floor. None of them are going north of that, Speaker.

Again, this bill—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Actually, they've been to the legislative library; that's a little further north.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Thank you for that geography lesson for the Legislature.

This is just not the way we discussed that a bill should be dealt with in this place. Time after time, we've had negotiations where all of a sudden the government stops talking to us and presents bills that will either choke off debate or move bills through quickly without hearing from constituents.

It's interesting: Many times I have quoted the chair of caucus, the member for St. Catharines. There are miles and miles of speeches that the member has made about his concern about time allocation. But there are many other members—many distinguished members of the Wynne government—who have said the same thing. The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. McMeekin, said on December 9, 2002: "We use closure so often around this place, one would almost be led to the belief that everyone has sort of sanitized views on everything"—"sanitized views on everything." That's what this government has now adopted after that member expressed those concerns back in 2002.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Do they have a minister of sanitation?

**Mr. Steve Clark:** You know, that was something we found out with the Ombudsman's report. The Ombudsman had his report on Hydro One. He talked about the fact that Hydro One employees were sanitizing emails and communications to the Ombudsman. Speaker, that



was so concerning to myself and members of the Ontario PC Party, Her Majesty's loyal opposition, that I actually wrote to Commissioner Vince Hawkes yesterday and asked the OPP to investigate the allegations that are in that report, because I'm tired of Hydro's—I'm tired of them trying to deceive this House. I stood up and made a point of privilege; I hope that the Speaker will rule on it soon.

There are other members of this government that I want to get on the record. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines, Mr. Gravelle, said on November 19, 2001: "It's just stunning that the way they choose to deal with it at the end of the day is to put time allocation on debate. It's wrong, I think everybody knows it's wrong and I think even the government members themselves know that it's the wrong way to approach it. It's certainly something we resist and that we'll argue against, but I guess as long as they have the power to do so, they'll continue to do it that way."

Wow. Those are Michael Gravelle's words from November 19, 2001.

0910

You see, Speaker, over and over again this government has tried to pledge that they want to co-operate with the opposition, that they want to work with us, that they want to hear the other side. But again, what happens is that after the negotiations are done, after the meeting is over, the government walks over to the table and they file their motions; they file their time allocation motion.

In this motion, they deal with this bill and put it forward. It's interesting that there are no dates on this bill. It's very, very interesting that it's all programmed in succession without a starting date.

The parliamentary calendar is published well in advance. Anybody can go onto the Ontario Legislature website and look at the parliamentary calendar for 2015 and 2016. But there are some rumblings around this place that this government may not bring back this Legislature until after the federal election on October 19. I don't know whether part of the time that these members opposite want to acknowledge whether that rumour is true or not, but it's just passing strange when you start looking at this substantive motion and see that it's one bill after the other after the other with no dates, with no information; it's just a little strange.

I hope, as part of this substantive debate, that someone over there can stand up and actually tell the people of Ontario what your plan is. Are you going to prorogue Parliament? Are you going to walk away until halfway through the legislative calendar? It's just a little interesting, when you start looking at this motion, to see that there's no information on whether these committees are going to meet in September, whether they're going to meet in October, November, December or maybe in February. Who knows? Who knows with this government? They operate by substantive motion; they operate by time allocation. Even their own members, when they're allowed to speak freely—

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** They're never allowed to speak freely.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Well, I'm quoting Mr. Gravelle.

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** Yes, but that was when they were in opposition.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Here's one from Mr. Colle, Eglinton-Lawrence, June 20, 2001. Here's what Mr. Colle said: "For people out there who perhaps don't understand the jargon of the Legislature, a closure motion basically means that this government is trying to cut off debate.... It has a habit of ensuring that the public doesn't get the chance to find out what's going on in major pieces of legislation." That was June 20, 2001. I can say the same thing today.

Here is a government that will table a four-page motion—a four-page motion—to program all these bills with minimal debate. I went through some of it yesterday.

Bill 37, An Act respecting Invasive Species. It basically says that "the Standing Committee on Social Policy shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days of public hearings for up to two days of clause-by-clause" on the bill. There you go: four days, that's it.

I talked about this last night. How did they market this bill? How did they let people know? Well, do you know what, Speaker? They're pulling out all the stops. This government is pulling out all the stops. They are going to put a notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel. There you go, right there. That's part of the—

**Mr. John Yakubuski:** We should send it out on Glen Murray's Twitter site.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** They are also going to put it on our website and Canada NewsWire. Do you know what? I can appreciate that the people up north, the people in southwestern Ontario and back where I come from in eastern Ontario—that's just going to run like wildfire through Leeds and Grenville.

Again, one of the things that I mentioned yesterday, and I'll mention it again today, is the fact that for every single bill they have talked about allowing people to come on a first-come, first-served basis. So let's face it, the minute this bill was tabled this government, all the ministries that are affected, put out notices to all their supporters to have them say that they want to submit to this bill.

I contend that there needs to be an amendment that does it based on a rotational basis, which has been our practice. Bill 80, which was debated yesterday—there will be a vote after question period today. That's what we ended up getting between the government and the New Democrats, that we would go on a rotational basis, that the government would pick a witness, we would pick a witness and the third party would. None of that is reflected in this bill.

I want to go through (c) and (d) just quickly before I pass it over to my colleague. Bill 52, the anti-SLAPP bill: The government has tried several times to put this on the order paper. I'll just read from the motion:

"That the Standing Committee on Justice Policy shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days com-

mencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days for public hearings and two days for clause-by-clause....”

This is a bill that stakeholders all across Ontario, especially up in northern Ontario, want to get on the record about. Again, all the government cares about is inside this place, inside this bubble of Queen’s Park. They don’t care about other voices being heard.

Finally, Bill 66, An act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin: “The Standing Committee on General Government shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days for public hearings and ... two days of clause-by-clause....”

This was a bill that was part of the House leaders’ meeting where I believe Mr. Bisson, the member for Timmins–James Bay, talked about the fact that there were—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Your buddy.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Some days.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** That’s right, some days.

That was a bill he wanted to meet on across the province. He wanted to meet on this bill not just in this place. He was very clear, and every time this meeting was brought up by the government House leader, Mr. Bisson reiterated that he wanted this bill to travel. That’s not reflected.

We’ve had several House leaders’ meetings that never seem to get reflected in this government’s guillotine-style substantive programming motion. It’s shameful.

I picked up the quotes from the members; I was going to do a couple more quotes, but anyway. What we’ll do is, I will put this amendment on the floor regarding the committee hearings.

Speaker, I move that the motion presented be amended as follows:

In each section—(a), (b), (c) and (d)—that bullet number two be struck out and replaced with the following:

“That the deadline for requests to appear be 2 p.m. on the Thursday of the week that the bill receives second reading; and

“That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

“That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 6 p.m. on the same date; and

“That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists.”

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Clark has moved an amendment as follows:

In each section—(a), (b), (c) and (d)—that bullet number two be struck out and replaced with the following:

“That the deadline for requests to appear be 2 p.m. on the Thursday of the week that the bill receives second reading; and

“That following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

“That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 6 p.m. on the same date, and;

“That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists.”

Mr. Clark.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** I’m going to defer debate. As I said, I share my time with the member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I recognize the member for Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I want to thank my colleague our House leader, Mr. Clark, from Leeds–Grenville, for opening up this debate on our behalf.

I see a number of the folks on the other side who were elected in 2014. It’s good to see them here. They worked hard in their campaigns, and it’s nice to see them. But they’ve never had the opportunity to see this House work under different circumstances like we did in a minority Parliament prior to the election of 2014. I can just picture the conversation that went on in the Premier’s office after the election of 2014. It would have been all of these high-powered folks like the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change sitting around the table and saying, “We lived through that minority, and it was painful to have to put up with the opposition and the third party, and having to give in sometimes and actually make this place work representatively for all of Ontario. It really was painful. So you know what we’re going to do? Here’s the plan: We’re going to say all of these nice, flowery things in the throne speech, and we’re going to talk about how we’re going to have partnership as opposed to partisanship and co-operation as opposed to coercion.

**0920**

“So what we’re going to have is all of this nice talk in our speeches, and we’re going to say how much we love those folks on the other side, and then we’re going to bring the hammer down. Then, when push comes to shove, we’re going to shut this place down.”

In fact, I was a little curious when the cabinet was named and the long-standing member from St. Catharines was named a minister without portfolio. You see, even that part of it was somewhat sanitized, because he should have been called the minister of sanitation, based on the quotes from the now Minister of Municipal Affairs, when he was a backbench member of the Liberal opposition, talking about how closure on debate and time allocation motions amounted to the sanitation of Parliament.

Well, the member for St. Catharines, the minister without portfolio—they’ve even sanitized that part of it, because he has been the champion of sanitation of this Parliament, if you take the words of his colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs into account, because closure is the order of the day.

But now we’ve even got something—they’ve progressed, even for Liberals. They’ve taken it to another level. Now we have omnibus closure—omnibus closure. It’s not enough for them to bring closure on one bill.



They bring motions on a multitude of bills, shutting down debate in this Parliament.

Everybody here, when they ran for election—and I guarantee you, everybody in this House, when they were out campaigning or when they were talking to the people on the street or when they were in debates—I guarantee you that at some point—do you know what word was used by everybody, because we respect the system we have so much? The word “democracy.” I guarantee you that every one of you over there uttered that word more than once. Unfortunately, you forgot what it means, because in this chamber, you have shut down democracy. You have decided that debate is not necessary, that public hearings are not necessary, that travelling across Ontario is not necessary.

The programming motion that we have here is more than substantive. It is more than substantive. It covers four bills: Bill 9, Bill 37, Bill 52 and Bill 66, all bills that are important to the people of Ontario. I’m just going to focus on Bill 66 for the time being, the Great Lakes Protection Act.

We are so fortunate in this part of the world. We probably have the greatest natural resource that exists, and that is the Great Lakes. Nowhere else in this world will you find a source of fresh water that even comes close to the Great Lakes. What has that meant to our country, to our continent—and, in fact, to the world—sitting in the middle of the two greatest democracies in the world, in my opinion? Democracies: Remember that word. I know it’s hard for you to think of it from time to time over there: democracies.

I’ve got to believe—listen, I’m not always right—

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I have got to believe that the people in Huron—Bruce would like to have something to say about Bill 66. I’ve got to believe that those folks in Leeds—Grenville, where the St. Lawrence River runs right by Brockville, they would like to talk about Bill 66. I’ve got to believe that the folks up in Prince Edward—Hastings and in the Bay of Quinte would like to talk about Bill 66.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Simcoe North.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Simcoe North.

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Sarnia—Lambton.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Sarnia—Lambton. I could go on and on and on.

But the way they’ve decided who gets to speak to Bill 66—it’s really going to be the same people who speak to every bill, because they’re the people that follow that massively read—what do we call it? The Ontario whatever? Parliamentary programming—there must be “programming” in it somewhere. So the notice for these—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** Ontario parliamentary channel.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Ontario parliamentary channel—oh my God, it’s one of my favourites, you know. I just push the button, turn on the TV and it automatically comes on, like everybody else in Ontario, millions of people. It’s the number one favourite channel on the—

**Interjection:** PVR list.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** —PVR list or whatever. They’ve got to document everything. So I’m sure that all of those people—and even if they are watching that channel—I think it’s a fair question to the minister of sanitation. Do you think it’s fair—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would ask the member to withdraw. We should show a little respect to our own colleagues.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I withdraw, but was I referring to anyone in particular?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We don’t have a minister of sanitation. Again, I ask for respect to your own colleagues.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, okay. I withdraw. Perhaps we have a minister of thin skin. I don’t know; we’ve got ministers—everybody’s—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Now you’re showing disrespect to the Speaker. I just asked you to refrain from showing disrespect, and you say now we have a minister of thin skin.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Is that what I said?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I’d ask you to withdraw.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Withdraw. As soon as you asked me, I withdraw.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. Proceed.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Well, I’ll let what’s going on here speak for itself, Speaker. I don’t even have to.

I’ve got to believe that people across this province would like to have their say on these bills, but this government is ensuring that they don’t. This government is ensuring that they control not only what happens in this chamber, but essentially they’re controlling the airwaves as well because they’re limiting access to the public to even know what’s going on. On top of that, even if they do find out what’s going on, their ability to actually get involved is extremely limited. In the case of some, it’s one day of hearings and one day of clause-by-clause, and in the case of one bill—

**Mr. Steve Clark:** No, two bills.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** In the case of two bills, it’s two days of hearings and two days of clause-by-clause. But that’s all taking place right here—according to what the Liberal government believes is the only place that matters—in the city of Toronto, right here at the Legislative building.

All of those people that would like to speak to this bill—if you’re living up in Timmins—James Bay, it’s really easy to get here, isn’t it, sir?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** It is—Porter Airlines.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh, Porter. And they fly out of where? Timmins?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Timmins.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Okay. But is that the whole riding?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Oh. When I'm thinking about up in the James Bay end of it—does Porter come and pick you up? Do they have a shuttle—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would ask the member for Timmins–James Bay to come to order, and I would ask the member that is speaking to address the Chair.

0930

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Okay; sorry. Maybe I could ask you, Speaker, then: Do you think it's very easy to get here from the northern reaches of the riding of Timmins–James Bay? Or is it easy to get here from the northern reaches of Kenora–Rainy River? Is it even easy—I can tell you, it's not that easy to get here from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. The people in my riding would like to have a say on some of these bills as well. There is no plane service to Toronto from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. There is no train service to Toronto from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke. You've got to get into your vehicle and drive. You've got to get on the road and drive. Now, wouldn't it be nice and wouldn't it be—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The member for Ottawa–Orléans is asking me how many people live there. Is this how we now decide whether people have a voice? We have to do a count? Are those 100,000 people in Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke not important? I say to the member from Ottawa–Orléans: Please apologize to my people. They are important. They are every bit as important as the people in Toronto.

Now, on top of all that—and I'm so glad that my colleague had a chance to speak to this ahead of time—no dates have even been established. So not only are we coming closer and closer to a dictatorship here, it's an open-ended dictatorship. They don't even tell you what day they're going to rule with an iron fist. They don't even tell you what day they're going to shut down democracy. They just say, "We'll let you know when it's coming"—no dates for any of these hearings on these bills. At no time does it talk about a date.

"That the Standing Committee on General Government shall, on its next four regularly scheduled meeting days commencing in the week following the passage of second reading of the bill, meet for up to two days of public hearings and for up to two days of clause-by-clause consideration of the bill"—no dates.

We know what the legislative calendar says when we're coming back. The government knows that. I think it would be quite easy for them to establish a couple of dates for each of these bills as to when we're going to debate them next and as to when clause-by-clause hearings will take place. But no, they just want to keep it open-ended.

The member from St. Catharines—minister without portfolio and deputy House leader—has been here longer than anybody. The mortar on this building has been re-chinked twice since he's been here. He loves to bring in closure motions and time allocation motions, but in the

past he and his colleagues, when they were in opposition, thought that they were the worst thing that could ever be done.

I know that the member for Ottawa South was waving his arms there earlier—I don't know if there were mosquitos in here or what, or if he was trying to get my attention—and he implied that somehow I was here when the previous government used time allocation. But I was not here, I say to the member. I was not here; I only got here in 2003. I've only had to sit through the painful years of Liberal government here. But I look forward to the day when the tables have turned and the people of Ontario say, "Trop, c'est trop. Enough is enough," and they throw this Liberal government out on its ear, and bring back true democracy to this chamber.

But let's hear Mike Colle—the member for Eglinton–Lawrence; pardon me. So, you have to ask, "Why all the closures? Why do they always want to stifle debate? Here they're pretending"—well, I wonder if the member from Eglinton–Lawrence would say the same thing about what's happening today. Or would he simply push the programming button that each one of those members has installed directly from the Premier's office, so that every time they stand up in debate, they just say exactly what they've been told to say from the Premier's office?

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Point of order.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Point of order, the member for Mississauga–Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Speaker, there are few members whose discourse I enjoy more than my colleague from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke's, but I must insist that he reread standing orders 23(h), (i), (j) and (k), which, among other things, prohibit him from imputing a motive or making an allegation against a member, including the member for Don Valley West. He was doing just fine until he strayed into that. I would ask that the Speaker enforce standing orders 23(h), (i), (j) and (k).

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you for that point of order. I return to the member, and I would ask you to refrain from those comments. I've requested that of you twice.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you. Apparently, nothing requires withdrawal, so I'm not really sure what I said that was wrong. But I will say this to the member from Mississauga–Streetsville: I will pledge to reread those sections of the standing orders, as requested.

Let me put things another way. It would appear, to most casual observers and also to those people who religiously watch the proceedings of this House, that the utterances of the backbench members of the government seem to be eerily similar whenever talking about pieces of government legislation. It would almost appear that the speeches have been somewhat vetted and/or perhaps even written by persons receiving directions from the Premier's office.

That is only my humble view, based on what I hear from real Ontarians out there. They'll say to me sometimes, "Yak, I watch that channel sometimes. I see you get up and speak, and nobody possibly could have writ-



ten that stuff”—because they wonder sometimes where it comes from; I wonder myself.

But they listen to some of the speeches from the government members, and they say, “Wow, it’s funny: They all say exactly the same thing. They’ve rephrased it slightly differently, but they say exactly the same thing. Are they being told what to say?”

I say, “You know what? I’ve never sat in government. I can’t believe that it works that way. But I share your concerns that it seems they just do whatever they’re told.” They just do whatever they’re told. And I say that respectfully to the members. They’re fine people; I don’t fault them. I want to make that very clear: I would never impugn the motives of a member of this House. I want to make that perfectly clear, Mr. Speaker. I would never do that, because I’ve gotten to know some of these people on a personal basis a little bit. They’re fine people. I’m going to say this in general: It is the control that we see too much in government.

I remember when my father was a member of this Legislature, elected in 1963. A lot of folks in this Legislature weren’t even born yet.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** When?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** In 1963. You were, because you were born in 1957; May 14, if I recall.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** That’s right. June 14 for you.

0940

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** But there is concern all across Legislatures and jurisdictions across this great country of ours, Canada, that governments exercise way too much control over their members, that the members themselves don’t really get to speak for their own constituents sometimes because the government message overrules even those local concerns. Those are not my words. You can read many political analysts who are saying the same thing.

Back in the day of my father being a member of this Legislature, things were different. Members came here and made sure that they were fighting tooth and nail for their constituents. I know that there are members on that Liberal side who have to support legislation even though they believe it is not in the best interests of their constituents.

I understand that for a government to be electorally successful, it needs to have a certain amount of control. But is that the only thing they care about over there, retaining power? Is that the only thing that matters to the people on the other side, power at all costs? My goodness gracious, whatever happened to government of the people, by the people, for the people, as Abraham Lincoln said in his Gettysburg address? Whatever happened to that? That’s something I think the Liberals need to pay more attention to when they’re running the show here now that they’ve got their majority back.

I heard the government House leader yesterday. Oh gosh, it was wonderful when he started talking about this motion; he just couldn’t get it out quick enough. “The people of Ontario gave us a tremendous mandate last June re-electing our government to a majority; therefore,

everybody loves us. Everybody thinks it’s right, and they want us to run this”—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, my goodness. Have I got the floor? I’ve lost control. I don’t even have the floor anymore. Speaker, give me a hand.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** If I could have a little quiet, I may be able to hear the speaker. If I could ask the folks on the right-hand side not to indulge in crosstalk.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I know where you’re coming from, Speaker. Sometimes in this place I have a hard time hearing myself. It just gets way too noisy.

I did enjoy that little exchange between the member from Timmins–James Bay and the member from Sudbury over the last provincial election. It would stand to reason that the member from Sudbury, at the time of the last provincial election, wasn’t knocking on many doors for Andrew Olivier.

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** You might want to check that.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Yes, I’m sure we can check that, but I’m pretty confident that there might have been an NDP member running up in that riding.

Anyway, I don’t want to get away from the matter at hand, the programming motion. It’s very important.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** You’re straying.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** I did stray a little bit. The odd time, I do stray from the topic here. What happens is people get heckling me, and I stray from the bill.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Can you speak through the Chair? Then you won’t worry about the heckling.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Okay, but do I always have to look at you?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** It would be a good idea.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Okay. I have a hard time standing still, Speaker. I’m not suggesting that it’s hard to look at you, okay?

We’ve got four bills that they brought in a huge programming motion for, a huge programming motion so that we will be dictated to come the fall. This is not going to happen before we leave here next week; this is going to happen in the fall. We know that come September or October—or when? Could we get a straight answer from the Liberals as to whether there’s any truth—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs just gave me the first straight answer I’ve gotten from a minister in this House, and do you know what he said to me? He said, “Never count on us for straight answers.”

**Hon. David Zimmer:** No, that’s not what I said.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** That’s the first straight answer that I’ve got.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I said you can always count on us.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** No, I heard “never.”

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, come to order.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** But if he wants to stand and correct his record, go right ahead.

Anyway, come the fall—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. Point of order.

**Hon. David Zimmer:** I’ve been invited to correct my record, and I would like to correct my record—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You’re not on the record.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Member from Renfrew–Pembroke–Pembroke, wrap up.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Speaker, could I request more time?

*Interjections.*

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Come September—we’ve seen some low days in this Legislature since June 12 of last year, and July 2, when we came back, but we’re going to see some low days here in the fall, because now we have gone from closure to omnibus closure—omnibus closure, coming in September, coming to a Legislature near you. That might be the movie ads this summer: You know, “Blockbuster coming in September.” Democracy-buster, coming in possibly September, possibly October, possibly November, or whenever Justin Trudeau tells you you can come back to work here. That’s scary.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I’ve just got to say this is a bit of an odd motion that the government is bringing forward. I’m waiting for the clerks to send me some information that I’ve asked them to bring here, so as soon as they can get it, I can go through the other part of what I want to raise in this debate.

The government is moving, by way of a substantive motion, four bills together, in order to be able, after six and a half hours, to move a time allocation motion that will allow the time allocation motion that’s contained within the substantive motion to be passed. So it’s a time allocation motion that’s, leading to a time allocation motion that’s going to pass a time allocation motion. I believe you don’t see that very often. They’ve put it under the guise of a programming motion, and I just want to speak to that, first of all.

A programming motion is when the parties agree. The three parties get together and they agree on whatever a program is, as far as being able to pass legislation through the House. We have done that here before—not a lot, but it has happened at times. It’s an agreement amongst the three parties that you sign off on. Normally, it’s done by unanimous consent, so you don’t have to have a substantive motion. It is a substantive motion that is passed with unanimous consent, so that you don’t have to have a full debate on the substantive motion.

In this particular case, the government is calling it a substantive motion, but this is not a substantive motion, because I, as the New Democratic House leader for our

team and for our leader, Andrea Horwath, have not agreed to this. I know that Mr. Clark, the House leader for the Conservative Party, has not agreed to this either. So you can’t call this a substantive motion, because in fact, the two opposition parties have not agreed.

So this, by any other name, is a time allocation motion. It’s an omnibus time allocation motion, to be specific. Let’s put that out there, right at the beginning.

What’s interesting is that what’s contained in this substantive motion are bills that you don’t even have to time-allocate. This is really, really silly. For example, last night, here in the House, we had a bill before us which had had two or three hours of debate in regard to third reading for the immigration act. There was an agreement amongst the parties that we all agreed, and we allowed the bill to pass to third reading within about three hours.

The night before, on Monday night, we were debating what?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Ag insurance.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Ag insurance, which eventually passed, right? Was that at third? That was at third, yes, because we have to have the vote on it.

We had the Agriculture Insurance Act, which had got to third reading—naturally, through the second reading stage, through committee, and back in to third reading. The parties supported that, and there was some minimal debate. I think there were about six or seven hours of debate at second reading, and there were probably about six or seven hours at third reading. But that’s because a number of members happen to represent rural constituencies and—surprise—guess what? People wanted to be on the record, having to do with an issue that is related to their riding. That’s what this place is all about.

The government seems to think that we’re somehow being dilatory. People watching back home, if you wonder what “dilatory” means, it’s that we’re being silly buggers trying to muck things up by debating bills that we want to be on the record on—not the case.

**0950**

It is normal for a bill at second reading to get anywhere from two hours to eight hours of debate. If you go back and look at all of the Hansards dating back to when I got here in 1990, there are some bills that have had far more debate than that. But on average, I would say between two and eight hours. On second reading, normally that’s what gets done.

If the government is wise—and this government at times has chosen to do this and I give them some credit for that—you allow bills to go through the House in their natural progression. That allows for members of the assembly on all sides to put on the record the issues they’re interested in, representing their constituency and putting their thoughts, thinking about what it is that has to happen once the bill gets to committee, and just let the bill go through its natural process by which it’s going to get into committee. That’s normally what happens.

In this particular case, we have a substantive omnibus motion that’s going to time-allocate four bills.

Bill 9 is the act in regard to the cessation of the use of coal. That’s a bill we all agreed to, which passed second



reading. I believe it went naturally; I don't think it was time-allocated. Maybe the Clerks can clarify that for me. We ended up going through committee and now we're here. The bill is at six hours and 32 minutes of debate time.

Guess what's going to happen, guys? You don't need to time-allocate this thing. Actually, we're at second on this one. It's six hours and 32 minutes. Let me rephrase that: We're at Bill 9, cessation of coal; we're at second reading, we're at six hours and 32 minutes.

The three parties agree and I would imagine we're probably almost done debate on that particular bill. If the government was to call that bill on one of those long midnight sittings, my guess is you'd probably get it.

Let's look at the other one: Bill 37, invasive species. I've given my lead. We're at second reading; we're at six hours and 50 minutes. I don't think there's a lot more debate to be done on that one. I think we're going to be pretty well done. I'm not sure how many more members of the House want to speak to it but I can't imagine there are all that many.

Then Bill 52, which is the anti-SLAPP legislation. We're again at second reading; we have six hours and 50 minutes. Again, I don't think there's all that much more debate left in this one. The government is putting this in an omnibus bill in order to move it out of second reading and into committee.

And Bill 66, which is the Great Lakes Protection Act, which is at almost four hours of debate.

My point is, when you look at these four bills, they're on the cusp of going into committee without even having the time allocated. Here's the other thing: If the government decided to time-allocate all four bills, you would probably get those four bills faster just by calling the time allocation motion because the time allocation motion is two hours. Four bills times two hours is eight, so it's eight hours of debate.

Guess what's going to happen with this substantive motion? I'll tell you now, we will talk this out because there are a number of amendments we want to be able to make. We believe that the way this thing was written was in such a way that leaves a little bit to be desired when it comes to hearings. You'll be hearing from us a little bit later on that. You're going to have six and a half hours of debate minimum on this substantive motion, plus a two-hour debate at time allocation for eight and a half hours. So you're actually slower using a substantive motion to move these bills through the House than you would be—thank you Monsieur Clerk—if you just did it naturally.

I don't even think that most of these bills would be time-allocated. I think there's a number of these bills that will probably go into the House pretty darn quick without having to go through a lot of debate in regards to going into time allocation.

You've got to ask yourself: Why is the government doing this? It's kind of bizarre, isn't it?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Because they can.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Because they can, my good friend from Niagara—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Welland.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** —Welland says, because they can.

I think it's one of those things where the government says, "We're going to show you. We're the government and, by God, we got a majority in the last election and we're going to show that we've got the authority to put our business through."

But who are you really serving when you do that? Are you serving the public? Limited time for public hearings, limited time for members to be able to put on the record their concerns or their support on those particular pieces of legislation: You're not serving the purpose of the public. You're only serving your own purpose, and I don't think this is what this place should be all about.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** They're not serving their own constituents.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** So I just say—well, they're not even serving their own constituents; I think you're right.

The point is that I don't think the government, quite frankly, is well served when it does what it's doing.

If you look at what's happened in the House up to now since the beginning of this session, there's a number of bills which the government has worked with the opposition on. We've gotten agreements to pass bills without even having to do time allocation to put bills into committee.

There are 25 bills that have gone through processes of second and third reading—at least second reading, and some at third. From the count, about half of those 25 bills have been time-allocated. In other words, the other half have gone the natural process.

I'm just saying to the government across the way that I'm a little bit perplexed as to why you've brought this particular motion forward. What you end up doing is doing an omnibus bill to time-allocate a bunch of bills that normally would be accepted by the assembly by the natural process of debate and the natural process through the committee.

For example, on the issue of cessation of coal: Please, is anybody opposed to the cessation of coal? Stand up; I'd like to know who you are. Each political party has had in their platform that we would phase out coal for over 15 years now. I know that we as New Democrats did. The Conservatives did for sure, and I know the Liberals did. We all agree that the use of coal is something that had to stop. We didn't stop it in the timelines we all wanted to, as far as what the government finally ended up doing, but we've actually reached the goal we had all set ourselves in our electoral platforms. So why is the government time-allocating a bill that, quite frankly, everybody in this House agrees on, that already has six hours and 32 minutes and probably is going to pass not too much further beyond at 6:32?

If you look at the Invasive Species Act, again, it's the same story. We're at six hours and 50 minutes on invasive species. I spoke to this bill. I thought I was clear. Maybe the government didn't understand what I was saying during my lead, and maybe they didn't understand what our members were saying, but we support the bill.

We never said we're going to hold up the bill. We never said that we're not going to allow the bill to go forward. We agree that something needs to be done in regard to invasive species. It's a problem in this province, and we need to be able to deal with it. Nobody has indicated from the Conservative caucus, like New Democrats, that they want to hold this up. We're fine.

But you know what members are doing? Members are putting their views and their constituents' views on the record. That's what this Legislature is about. I think part of the problem we get into is because we now have this tool called "time allocation" in our standing orders, the government, more and more, moves away from what the intent of the Legislature is supposing to be all about; that is, to be able to voice our concerns or to voice our support on particular bills and to suggest what we think is lacking in the bill so that when it gets to committee, those items can be looked at but, more importantly, to give the public the ability to have their say when it comes to what the bill looks like and what it should be doing by way of amendment for it to go back to third reading.

So it's penalizing members in the public to do what it is that we're supposed to do within our rights as members and the rights of the public to be able to come and present to committee. Why are you penalizing the public? What has the public ever done to you that you need to time-allocate a bill that naturally is going to pass anyway, and all that the public wants is their ability to have their say?

For example, the government is moving on the privatization of Hydro through the budget bill. What have you got against the public that you don't want to allow them to have their say on Hydro privatization? Are you afraid they may say something that you're going to take offence to? If somebody does, well, welcome to politics, and welcome to government. The minute you get elected, 50% of the people are going to be opposed—maybe not opposed, but may not be onside with whatever you're trying to do. That's just the nature of things.

What governments try to do and what members try to do individually is to do the best we can to represent the needs of our constituents and the needs of the province. But this government is saying, "No, no. Let's not do public hearings on the road over the privatization of Hydro. We know best as a government because Kathleen Wynne, the Premier of Ontario, is real smart, and she knows what's best for everybody. We don't need to listen to the public. Oh, God, no, because the public may have something to say, and we don't need to take that into consequence."

We're not giving the public their due, and the due of the public in all of these bills that are contained within this particular omnibus bill, the substantive motion—the public should have an ability to have its say.

1000

When I first got here in 1990, we didn't have time allocation. Here's what used to happen: Let's say there were 20 bills on the order paper. The parties would get together—because an opposition party or an individual

member could hold up a bill as long as they wanted. I hearken back to the days of Peter Kormos.

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Seventeen hours.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** There was a 17-hour debate by Mr. Kormos over a period of two days when he held up this Legislature on auto insurance—which was his right. I'm sure that the government wasn't happy. I can tell you that Bob Rae wasn't, because I heard the story. Bob was trying to shut him down, which is a whole other story. But Mr. Kormos had the right to try to slow that bill down to make the point that he was trying to make. That's what a Legislature is all about. But do you know what? Even though the government of the day did not have time allocation—and the member from St. Catharines was here at the time—there was a process entirely within our caucus by which our leader, the future Premier of Ontario, Mr. Rae, dealt with Mr. Kormos and got some kind of an agreement in regard to hearings that travelled, that went on the road, where Mr. Kormos was able to get constituents to come and speak to the bill.

Who got the short end of that deal? Certainly not the public; the public actually got their say. And that's what this Legislature should be all about. It shouldn't be about a private club called the Liberal club of Ontario or the Conservative club of Ontario or the NDP club of Ontario when it comes to whoever sits on the other side of the House and they only do what it is that they want. This is about the people. This is the people's chamber. This is where legislators gather in order to be able to debate issues, try to represent our constituencies and, more importantly, give the public the opportunity to come to committee to be able to speak to bills.

When I got here in the 1990s, when there was no time allocation, there were some bills that travelled for two and three weeks in the intersessions, either winter or summer. Do you know what? It allowed members to go out across Ontario to get to know this province a little bit better, to get to know each other a little bit better as members and to get to know the issue a lot more. We got members who got to be quite expert on particular subject matters as a result of the work they were doing on committee.

Here is the beautiful part about it: The public got a chance to have its say. So you would go to Kenora; you would go to Sioux Lookout; you'd go to Cornwall and Ottawa and London and other places around Ontario, and the public would gather at these hearings. They would come because they knew that the Legislature was listening. And guess what we did when we listened, Mr. Speaker? We used to amend the legislation, because we used to say, "You know what? The public came forward. We've had four or five presentations where they pointed out that this particular clause in the bill doesn't make a lot of sense for the following reasons," and we would amend.

I'll give you a good example. Michael Harris—do you remember him? He was Premier of Ontario for some time here. I was an opponent of Mr. Harris. I thought most of what he did—I was completely on the opposite side of it.



But we had a bill in order to allow snowmobile clubs to charge a licence to ride on trails, and it became mandatory. It was a bill that most members of the House accepted; I certainly supported it, and I know that the Liberals at the time—Mr. Bartolucci was on committee with me; he accepted it. But we went out and we travelled the bill.

I remember that we ended up in some community somewhere in northern Ontario; I forget where it was. Somebody came forward and pointed out something in the bill that didn't work. There was a section of the bill, the way it was written, that would completely stymie the ability for snowmobile clubs to get agreements to do their trails on crown land—when they had to go across a hydro right-of-way or whatever they were trying to go through. And this person came before the committee and said, "I've been reading this—and I'm not an expert; I'm just a lawyer and I love my snowmobile. When I read this, as a member of the snowmobile club of" whatever town, "this section does completely the opposite of what it is that you're trying to do."

I remember that the government person who was taking lead on the bill—I forget who it was—said, "No, no, no. You're wrong. We've done this," and he challenged the person in the presentation. But then, even the Conservative members started going, "Hang on. We've got a problem here."

Guess what we did? We amended the bill. The service that that individual brought to this Legislature by coming before the committee to point out that there was an error with the bill, which we then amended and fixed—he did us a service, not a disservice, because we now have legislation that works. That's what this place should be all about.

What the government does when they do omnibus time-allocation motions or individual time-allocation motions and don't allow bills to go through the natural process—you're shutting the public out, let alone my right as a member to speak; you're shutting the public out. People have views. People want to know that when they have a view, they can express it, and if it's on a bill, that they can come to committee and say what they have to say.

Like I said, when I got here in 1990 and there was no time allocation, if there were 20 or 25 bills on the order paper, there were probably only about four to five bills that got a lot of hearings—a week or two or three weeks of travel in the province. Most other bills went through the House fairly quickly, but the rule was always that you would allow the bill to go to committee, in order to give the public an opportunity to have its say. Why? Because the bills that were like the ending coal bill and the invasive species bill and others were bills that everybody agreed on. They tended to go through a lot more quickly.

On other bills that were more controversial and more substantive, yes, there would probably be 10, 12 or 14 hours of debate, because they were more substantive and they demanded more time. But that was an agreement that was done with the House leaders. You would say, "Okay, we're fine on invasive species. We're only going to put up two speakers"—one party would say. The other

party would say, "I'll put up two or three, and that's all we'll do, but we're going to put up more people on this other bill." That's the way this place worked.

The government, by doing this omnibus bill—by which they're bringing forward four bills in one in this omnibus time-allocation motion—I believe are not helping themselves, because it's going to take them longer to pass it this way than it would to do it naturally.

If these were controversial bills, like the budget, like privatizing hydro—serious bills that the opposition has opposition to, like the Tories, for that fact, on the Ontario pension plan bill—then I would understand why they're trying to time-allocate. I still wouldn't agree, but I'd understand: because there would be substantive resistance in the House to having that bill go through. But these four bills are hardly bills that the opposition has a problem with. Bill 66, Great Lakes Protection Act, is at second reading with almost four hours of debate. Bill 83, the anti-SLAAP bill; Bill 37, the Invasive Species Act; Bill 9, ending the use of coal: They're all bills that the opposition in both parties support. So why are we time-allocating stuff when, quite frankly, there's an agreement in the House?

It tells me there are a couple of things going on. One is that the government doesn't want to listen to the public in a meaningful way. Yes, there are going to be some hearings in this time allocation motion. I see we're going to allow witnesses to come forward for a day here or two days there, depending on what the bill is, but we're not going to travel any of these bills. For example, on the use of coal—it would be kind of interesting to go up to Thunder Bay—Atikokan. We shut down a coal plant there; maybe the people of Thunder Bay—Atikokan would like to have their say. Guess what? The people of Sarnia—Lambton want to have a say as well about what this has meant to their communities. So why are we not at least travelling the bills to the communities that are affected? "No, we're only going to do it here in Toronto."

With regard to the Invasive Species Act, there's hardly a community in Ontario that is not affected. Now, I'm not arguing we should have to travel the Invasive Species Act for weeks and weeks to a hundred communities, but there are a number of people across Ontario who want to speak to it, and what I'm saying is that this motion is going to limit the ability for the public to have their say. The only place they're going to be able to come to do that is the mother ship called Toronto.

I just want to point out to members of the assembly that I love Toronto. I think Toronto is a great city. It has been voted the number one city in the world, and I'm quite proud of that as an Ontarian. But you know what? There's Timmins, there's Welland, there's Ottawa. There are all kinds of communities around Ontario that are just as important—

**Interjection:** Sudbury.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Sudbury—and hearings—

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Niagara Falls.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I said Welland, so I'm going to give you one, not two. All right, we'll give you Niagara. We'll do Niagara. You're welcome.

But my point is, those communities are just as important as Toronto. Why are we only doing hearings here? It's not as if we've never had a practice of travelling bills.

The first thing you're doing by this time allocation motion, this omnibus time allocation motion, is you're in fact selling the public shy. You're actually not respecting the public. You're actually not respecting the various regions of this province, to have their say. I think that is disrespect, and I think, eventually, that's the type of thing that's going to come up to bite the government. They say it's not opposition parties that defeat governments; it's governments that defeat themselves. I think the government, by doing what they're doing, is actually writing their own demise, because at some point the public says, "You know what? They're not listening to me. If somebody is prepared to listen to me, maybe I'll vote for them."

It's a little bit like what happened with the NDP in Alberta, with Rachel Notley and Mr. Prentice. What happened in Alberta wasn't just a question of how the NDP ran a great campaign—which they did; it was a question of how Mr. Prentice defeated himself. Mr. Prentice made a number of errors going into that election, where the public said, "You know what? We've had these guys for 44 years, and these guys just don't get it. So whoever out there who is prepared to speak to how I feel and counter what Mr. Prentice and the Tories are doing, I'm prepared to vote for it." And Rachel Notley ran a very strong campaign. She's an amazing leader in the sense that she's very charismatic, very dynamic, and in the end she basically won a majority government in Alberta, a place that you would never have thought the NDP would actually form the government, let alone get a dozen seats.

1010

What I'm saying is that the government here, by doing what you're doing with these time allocation motions, is doing the same kinds of stuff that quite frankly defeats governments. I will argue that there's probably a darned good chance that Mr. Harper is going to lose the next election federally, and I think there's a good chance he's going to lose it to Thomas Mulcair. Why? Because that government is forgetting what they're there for. At the end of the day, it's about the public. The problem with governments, after they're there for a long time—of all stripes; I'm not going to sit here holier than thou and say that doesn't happen to the NDP as well—is that they tend to forget what they're there for. They become an institution unto themselves, and they say, "Oh my God, I've got to get my legislative agenda through." It doesn't matter who stands in the way. The public—who are they? And they do time allocation in the way that they're doing now. So I just say to my colleagues across the way that it is not the way to do things.

On the Great Lakes Protection Act, Bill 66, I know there are people who want to speak to that in and around places like southern Ontario, along Lake Ontario, the various Great Lakes, Niagara Falls—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** St. Catharines.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** St. Catharines. I know there are people who want to speak to that. Again—

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Port Colborne.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Port Colborne. Again, do we need to send the committee to every community in that area? Absolutely not, but we can pick some communities so that the public can have their say, and guess what? The government might learn a few things. You might actually get into a situation where you're told things and you start to open your ears and hear what the public has to say, and you might make a better bill. But again, I just say and I—

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's the Great Lakes basin; that goes right up to the Arctic watershed.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oh, it goes right up to the Arctic watershed, which is in your riding and mine.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** It's the Great Lakes basin—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** The watershed is where?

**Mr. John Vanthof:** In my riding.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** It's actually in your riding. Actually, it's not in my riding; it's in your riding. That's right.

**Mr. John Vanthof:** Not everything is in your riding. You've got whales; I've got the watershed.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** I know, I've got whales and you've got the watershed. Okay, let's get that straight.

I just say to the government that I think you're really not helping your own cause by doing this, and you're certainly not helping the cause of the public. We, the opposition, will survive. We'll live to fight on another bill. You know, it's not as if the government is never going to bring another bill forward, so who are you fooling?

Again, in the last two or three minutes that I have, I just want to make the point that you're going to have a six-and-a-half-hour debate on an omnibus motion to time-allocate four bills for which you're probably going to time-allocate the omnibus substantive motion for another two hours. It's actually going to take you longer to time-allocate this stuff than if you just let it go naturally. Even if you wanted to time-allocate the bills individually, it still would be faster just to time-allocate individually. I don't understand the House management strategy in the government House leader's office, because if I was the government House leader, first of all, I think and I hope I wouldn't use time allocation. I hope, but who knows? Anything is possible in this place. That's the one thing that I've learned. But I would hope I wouldn't. But if I did have to use time allocation, I'd be looking at these bills and I'd be saying, "Listen, I can probably make a deal on all four of these bills somehow to allow them to go forward in exchange for something with the opposition," like more hearings on some of these bills or other bills; or, in the case of New Democrats, severing out the Hydro portion of the budget bill and allowing the Hydro portion to travel out in committee. If the government wants to do that, I'll pass all of these bills today. I'll put it on the record here today: If the government is prepared to travel out the Hydro portion of this bill, we'll agree to the terms of these time allocation motions for travel without any difficulty.



But again, will the government do that? No, because I believe the government is locked into this process where they think they know better than the public, and I think, Mr. Speaker, that's just not the way to do things.

I'm watching the clock. You want me to go for another minute? Okay, well, let me just say this because I'm trying to keep some time for the next time we come. I'll have about 30 minutes, which is good. I just want to say again, it's just not the way to do things. I look at these types of approaches—

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** What's that?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** What's wrong with listening to the public?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Well, there we go; there's 30 seconds of debate anyway. What's wrong with listening to the public? You're never wrong. Can you imagine—think of it this way: We all get phone calls from constituents, on all sides of the House. Imagine if we took the policy that we're not going to return the calls? How long would we hold on to our seats? Not very long. So I decided that I think the government should be listening to the public and answering these calls when it comes to committee.

*Debate deemed adjourned.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until 10:30 a.m.

*The House recessed from 1015 to 1030.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**Mr. Norm Miller:** I'm very pleased to welcome page captain Jessica Terry's family here today to the Legislature. They're in the members' west gallery. Her mother, Shena Terry; father, Dean Terry; and brother Josh Terry are all here to see page captain Jessica Terry.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** I ask all members to welcome representatives of CUPE's 55,000 education workers, including members of their bargaining team: Bonnie Dineen, Sue Hanson, Rod McGee, Sylvain Piché, Heather Skolky and Laura Walton.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Mr. Speaker, please help me welcome to the House today two guests from York region: Hilary Jacob and her son, Matthew Merrick.

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's my delight to introduce to the House today grade 5 and 6 students from Annette public school who instituted an anti-bullying program for LGBTQ kids—on their own. It wasn't their teacher who did it. They did it on their own.

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It's my pleasure to welcome to the gallery today my OLIP intern, Clare Devereux, and her mother, visiting from BC, Katherine Meredith. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Mr. Taras Natyshak:** I'm honoured to welcome two friends to Queen's Park today who are CUPE educational workers: Tracey Newman, an educational assistant who supports the learning of children with special needs; and Susy Viana-Azevedo, who is a designated early child-

hood educator teaching in the full-day kindergarten program. I want to welcome them here to Queen's Park today.

**Mr. Chris Ballard:** I'd like to welcome high school students who participated in the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championship held in Hong Kong last month: Martine Duffy, who finished third in overall competition; Olivia Raitlon, from my riding of Newmarket-Aurora, who claimed top slot in the debating category; and Sarah Hick, who finished fifth in the overall competition. Welcome to them and their families here today.

**Ms. Jennifer K. French:** It is my privilege to introduce a friend from Oshawa, Arnaldo Beni, who has made his way to Queen's Park to take it all in today.

**Mr. Yvan Baker:** I have the pleasure of welcoming two groups of people here today.

First of all, we have page captain Luke Woolcock's family here today in the members' east gallery. We have his mother, Vita Peri; his father, Mike Woolcock; his sister, Michaela Woolcock; and his brother Christopher Woolcock. Welcome to Queen's Park.

I'd also like to acknowledge the CUPE education workers who are here from my riding of Etobicoke Centre and from across the province: Bonnie Dineen and the rest of the team. Welcome.

**Mr. Randy Pettapiece:** I'd like to welcome Hope Robertson. She is marketing and PR manager for Wightman Telecom, which is located in Clifford, in my riding.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** It gives me great pleasure today to introduce Ann and Peter Walters, who are joining us today from Oakville.

I'd also like to introduce the girls from St. Mildred's-Lightbourn School. They're the members of the robotics team that just won the world championship down in St. Louis. Their names are Ria Kalra, Michelle Dhar, Vicky Wang, Marie Jolicoeur-Becotte, Ayra Kathuria and Amy Li. Their teachers and mentors are Nathan Chow, James Chaykowski, Ken Rogerson and Sarah Sils.

Speaker, please give them the congratulations they deserve for making Ontario proud.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I will.

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** It gives me great pleasure to stand up again to welcome my page, Robert Heckbert, a student from Henry Larsen Elementary School in Ottawa-Orléans. But most of all, I would like to welcome his mother, Susan Bellamy, a very dedicated mother who spent a week with him at Queen's Park. Thank you for being here.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** I would like to introduce the secondary school Glendale High School. The teachers and students are arriving as we speak.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** I know that they're arriving here in the next couple of minutes. I'd like to welcome to the Legislature today delegates from the Sporting Clube de Portugal, the very club that Cristiano Ronaldo started his career with. They are here today to join us for part of question period.

We have board member and head of Sporting Clube de Portugal, Mr. Bruno de Mascarenhas; youth technical director, Mr. Virgilio Lopes; the head of grassroots, Mr. Luis Dias; technical director of sporting academies, Mr. Nuno Figueiredo; as well as technical director of Sporting Football Club of Toronto, Mr. Pedro Dias. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I would like to welcome individuals from CJPAC, the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, to question period this morning. Joining us today are Jaime Reich, director of outreach and programming, and their summer interns, Michelle Naftalis, Jonathan Glustein, Kelly Bryant and Lorne Geller. Welcome to Queen's Park.

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I wanted to congratulate the curious, intelligent, well-mannered and a little shy page Abby Deschene, who was page captain yesterday. I forgot to honour her, so I thought I would do it today.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** Speaker, it's almost like it's Oakville day. In the gallery today, we've got a young man who has just got an incredible voice. He came to sing for the Premier today. His name is Colin Brennan, standing right there in the pink shirt, with his dad, Gordon.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

**Hon. Glen R. Murray:** My colleague introduced Sarah Hick and Martine Duffy, who we're enormously proud of, but the whole family's here: Simone, her sister; John Duffy; and Jill Presser—very impressive family, great policy minds, great lawyer, great kids. Congratulations there, dear friends and constituents.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Speaker, I'd like to welcome members of CUPE here today, especially CUPE Local 1022.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I don't have a list of names, so I'm just going to try to welcome all the CUPE members who haven't already been welcomed by a member in the chamber.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** That's one of my old tricks.

## ORAL QUESTIONS

### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** My question is for the Premier. Premier, your back-to-work legislation isn't going to fix the chaos you've created in Ontario's classrooms. Yesterday, your Minister of Education said she thought a sense of urgency is really important. She said you had a sense of urgency when you asked the Education Relations Commission for a ruling. I'm not sure, and we're not sure, how waiting 10 days for the ERC to tell you the school year was in jeopardy was showing a sense of urgency, especially since the official opposition gave you the same ruling weeks ago.

Premier, will you finally show a sense of urgency and get a deal done so grade 8 students can receive the proper transition they deserve?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I know the Minister of Education will want to comment on the specifics, but our primary objective has been to get kids back into the classroom. That's why we have been working at the table. There are negotiations going on right now. As we speak, there are conversations at various tables to try to get deals. We will continue to work to get that central deal.

The Education Relations Commission is the body that has been in place for decades that rules on jeopardy in a school year. I know the party opposite doesn't necessarily like to follow due process, doesn't necessarily believe in the process, whether it's around collective bargaining or otherwise, but we do. We think it's important, when there is a process in place, that we follow that process. That's what we've done. The kids are back in school, and that's where they need to stay.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Premier: The government has already damaged one school year, and we've been told, just a little while ago, that it won't be business as usual in Ontario Catholic schools in September. Along with the 800,000 elementary school students, Catholic school students will be without any activities outside of regular class this fall. We know there will be a full-blown strike by the end of September. That isn't a leak. That isn't speculation. That is what the four unions have said.

1040

Premier, will you get a deal done before the end of this school year, or will you leave the parents and children wondering if the classroom doors will be locked next fall?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** You spoke about the English Catholic teachers. I'm here to report that we're negotiating with the English Catholic teachers. We have a number of dates working with them over this week and the next couple of weeks.

My intent is to be at the table and bargaining. There's lots of rhetoric out there, but there are three months before the school year starts. I intend to be at the table bargaining, just as we will be with the English Catholic teachers in the next couple of weeks.

Memos go out and statements get made in the media, but the important thing is what actually happens at the table, because the only place we can get—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

Final supplementary.

**Mr. Jim Wilson:** Back to the Premier: Premier, you've had three of 72 school boards go on strike this past month. Now you have all four unions threatening to strike in the fall. Parents need to prepare, and children don't need this uncertainty.

Come September, we will have over two million students not receiving the education they deserve, at the rate things are going. Your minister hasn't been able to do the job, and you've shown no sense of urgency.

So may I suggest, Premier, as an incentive, that you say today that you will fire your Minister of Education if



there are any strikes this fall and put a minister in place that will get the job done?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Actually, what I'd like to do is get a little bit of clarity on their plan for the rest of the day, because what I heard Tuesday night from the official opposition was that they didn't think that we needed to pass the Protecting the School Year Act, that it was an irrelevant bill. It will be coming up for second and third reading, I expect, this afternoon. I'd like to know what their position is going to be when that act comes up, because that act is standing between 72,000 students and a strike that will start on June 10 if we don't pass the act. So I want to know if they still think that act is irrelevant.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** My question is to the Minister of Education. Minister, we will be supporting Bill 103 at second and third reading, okay? Today, with the passage of Bill 103, we will only put a finger in the dam. It's simply a band-aid, and you know that.

Since last September, the two-tiered disaster Bill 122 has seen virtually no bargaining take place with any results. It has simply been a process of finger pointing with no leadership taking place at your ministry.

September 8 is only 102 days away, and that's when the kids go back to school. Turmoil is about to break out. Since September 1, 2014, 268 days have passed, and all we can say is that back-to-work legislation will pass today. That's all we've got.

Minister, do you believe Bill 122 is good legislation for the education sector in our province?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Yes, I do. It's interesting: The party opposite was against Bill 122 in the first place. The Labour Relations Board actually said that the interpretation that the government had of the legislation was the correct interpretation all along. But what I find really surprising is this party, which campaigned on getting rid of 10,000 education workers—22,000, actually, if you did the math carefully—thought they'd just get rid of people. Is that their solution for how you handle the issues quickly? Because I think the way is to use those 102 days or 103 days and make sure that we get agreements in place before we go back to the school year—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Back to the minister: Patrick Brown and the PC caucus believe that Bill 122 is nothing more than a tool for you to avoid transparent bargaining. With only 102 days before turmoil breaks out in all 72 boards in Ontario—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Come to order.

Please finish.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** We simply cannot see almost two million students being faced with education disruptions this September. With all the teacher federations and school boards unanimous in the fact that no bargaining is actually taking place, we are heading for an education tsunami.

Will you fix Bill 122 now so that our students, parents, teachers and boards can do what is best for education, and that is simply to teach?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I find it quite fascinating. I followed their leadership campaign pretty closely, and I don't remember Patrick Brown ever having a single thing to say about what education policy would be in Ontario if he happened to be the Premier—other than, of course, on sex ed. We know what he thinks about that—nothing else.

But what I really want to say is that the—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Good thought. Finish, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** What I really want to talk about is what has happened in the schools this week. The party opposite wants to talk about chaos—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** You want us to solve all your problems.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew—second time.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:**—which they presume will break out in the fall. I presume we're going to negotiate. But I want to talk a little bit more about what went on in the schools this week.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplementary.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Minister, the education turmoil is growing. There are many people very disgusted with the fact that Bill 122 has been a disaster.

Here's an email I got this morning: "All the teachers, janitors and secretaries, and even the rats and mice, are on the verge of walking out in September of this year if this continues to go on."

You think a summer of bargaining under the current legislation will result in all boards and federations coming to agreements. Patrick Brown and the PC caucus believe that next fall will be spent with one back-to-work legislation being introduced after another.

Minister, will you show—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Stop the clock. Please wrap up. Sorry for the interruption.

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** Minister, will you show leadership, admit the two-tiered system is a complete failure, and bring in new legislation that will allow everyone in the education system to bargain in good faith, and not disrupt the education of two million students next fall?

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** I don't believe we have a central table for rats and mice, so we won't be bargaining with them—everybody else, yes. But I want to talk about what happened in the schools yesterday.

What happened in the schools yesterday was that the teachers came back to work. I had a conversation with all three school boards this morning. What each and every one of them reported is that our professional teachers were happy to be back in the classroom, our students were happy to be back in the classroom, and the teachers were delighted to be able to get back to learning and teaching students. There is a lot of commitment in each and every classroom to making this school year a success. Passing the legislation this afternoon will ensure that happens.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My question is for the Premier. Does the Premier believe that Ontarians deserve a right to have a say on whether their Hydro One is sold off?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Mr. Speaker, I do, and in fact, it's why we were very, very clear in our platform and in our budget about what our plan was. We were very clear that—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just go through some of the public statements, Mr. Speaker. In an April 11 news release before the 2014 election, Hydro One was in the headline. The quote was, "The Ontario government has appointed a council to recommend ways to improve the efficiency and optimize the full value of Hydro One...."

1050

The 2014 platform, our platform: "Our Moving Ontario Forward plan includes a balanced and responsible approach to paying for these investments. The funds will be from dedicated sources of revenue ... asset optimization...."

Hydro One is mentioned three times in our budget in reference to asset modernization. It was fully public that we were going to be looking at our assets.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Not a single Ontarian voted to sell off Hydro One last year, because as the Premier has just admitted, the Liberals did not run on it. For months they denied that it was even their plan. They stood in this House—in fact, that Premier stood in this House and promised that she wasn't going to sell off and privatize Hydro One. But here we are: The Premier is selling off Hydro One.

Will she stop this sell-off and give Ontarians a chance to have their say through a referendum?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Let me just continue. In our budget: "The government will look at maximizing and unlocking value from assets it currently holds, including real estate holdings as well as crown corporations such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario."

Page 164 of the budget: "The province's valuable assets include large and complex government business

enterprises ... such as the LCBO, Hydro One and OPG. To identify opportunities to optimize the full value and performance of these core assets, the government will launch an in-depth review process."

Page 257: "Exploring options to unlock the full value of a wide range of valuable provincial assets, including those of large and complex government business enterprises ... specifically, the LCBO, Hydro One and Ontario Power Generation."

We made it very clear that we were looking at our assets and that we were going to be reviewing them in order to optimize their value.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Final supplement—

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Ontarians own Hydro One and they deserve a say as to whether or not it gets sold off.

They also deserve honesty from their government. The Premier, just six months ago, said that she was not selling off Hydro One. She said this in this very chamber. It is in Hansard; it is in black and white. That's what she said in this chamber. Yet, lo and behold, six, seven months later Hydro One is on the auction block.

Will this Premier do the right thing and take this question to the people of Ontario, and let them have a referendum on whether their hydro utility is sold off to Bay Street?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I'm going to read a quote from Hansard from the leader of the third party, but Mr. Speaker, just remember that what we are talking about here, what the leader of the third party is talking about is not having the funds to pay for the transportation infrastructure around the province that she knows is critical. She knows the Hamilton LRT is—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Transportation and the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek come to order—second time for the member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** She knows that those investments are critical but she does not have a plan to pay for them.

Here is what the NDP leader said just days after the last election. It was so clear that we were optimizing, that we were looking at our assets and all options were on the table. Here's what she said: "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'" NDP leader, July 9, 2014.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** My next question is for the Premier. You know what? That's because I was saying to the people of Ontario, "Your Premier is about to sell off



all of your assets.” Thank you for letting them know that I told them about that back in June.

Speaker, once this Premier sells off Hydro One there will be no going back. Bills will skyrocket. We will lose control of an asset that supports education, that puts money into health care, that helps support our investments in infrastructure each and every single year.

Does this Premier really think that she has the right to sell off Hydro One without ever asking the permission of Ontarians who own it? Will she do the right thing by the people: Will she actually take a step back and give them their say and hold a referendum on this sell-off?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** The leader of the third party knows that we will retain 40% ownership. The people of Ontario will retain 40% ownership of Hydro One and control of the board. She knows that. She knows full well that the regulatory protections that are in place now will continue to be in place in terms of where assets will be built around the province and the price controls. She knows all of that.

She also knows that in a role of responsibility and leadership, there are difficult decisions. We made a decision that we were going to invest in infrastructure in this province. The leader of the third party does not and has not supported that, which in my opinion, is irresponsible. In order for this province to grow, we must invest in infrastructure: in roads and bridges and transit. She doesn't want to do that. She has no plan to do that. We do. We ran on it, and that's the plan that we're implementing.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Supplementary?

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Nobody believes this Premier's rhetoric. The bottom line is, I have been talking to Ontarians. I've been listening at town hall meetings across this province to what Ontarians have to say, and I can inform the Premier that Ontarians across the province have been saying that they don't want their Hydro One to be sold off.

The Premier and every one of her backbenchers know that Ontarians cannot afford to pay the price of the sell-off of Hydro One because they have been getting thousands upon thousands of emails from Ontarians. If the Premier is so sure of Ontarians' support for her sell-off, then she has no reason whatsoever not to have a referendum.

Will this Premier agree to ask Ontarians whether they believe in public control of Hydro One or a scheme to sell it off to energy speculators, to foreign owners and to Liberal friends?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I do believe in public control, and that's why we're retaining 40% ownership.

A year ago, the NDP asked us to take our plan to the people of Ontario. We did that a year ago, and this is why we are here implementing our plan.

Here's the rhetoric that the leader of the third party is pointing to: the rhetoric of the Barrie GO line electrified, weekly trips that will move from 70 to 200; the rhetoric

of a Kitchener line, weekly trips of 80 to 250; the rhetoric of a Hamilton LRT; the rhetoric for connecting links being built around the province; the rhetoric of building bridges in communities across the province. That's what she's calling rhetoric.

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The conversation between members on one side and the other is going to stop while the question is being put and the answer.

Wrap up, please.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** It is not rhetoric to invest \$230 million in rural and northern gas expansion. It's not rhetoric to invest \$15 million—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Find another source.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke is warned.

Finish—one sentence.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:**—fifteen million dollars a year in Connecting Links. That's not rhetoric. That's action, and that's what we're doing.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Final supplementary.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** Speaker, \$8.2 billion is what the AG criticized this government for wasting—eHealth, Ornge air ambulance, the gas plants. This is the most wasteful government in the history of Ontario. That money should have gone into infrastructure.

Not only that, this government continues to give new tax loopholes and other giveaways to the corporate sector that are going to cost us \$1 billion each and every year, Speaker. On top of that, we're going to lose \$300 million at the very least in revenues from the sell-off of Hydro One.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Minister of Economic Development, second time.

**Ms. Andrea Horwath:** This does not belong to the Premier in terms of a decision. It does not belong to the cabinet. It does not belong to the Liberal Party. It belongs to Ontarians. It's their decision to make, and selling Hydro One without listening to the people of Ontario—who own it—is completely undemocratic.

Will she do the right thing? Will this Premier ask the people of Ontario their opinion through a referendum?

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Be seated, please. Thank you.

Premier.

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Charles Sousa:** Mr. Speaker, we've been very clear. In April 2014, we produced and delivered a budget that talked very clearly about the need to reinvest in our economy, to grow our economy and protect the interests of the public.

The NDP chose not to even show up to the lock-up and deliberate over this budget. Instead, they copied parts of that budget—most of it, in fact—and used it in their platform, talking about optimizing assets, talking about how do we cut various—we didn't cut.

1100

We're doing everything possible to reinvest in our economy. In fact, in July, I got a chance to reintroduce that same budget. In October 2014, we introduced a fall economic statement again reaffirming what we were doing. Then, in April 2015, we put forward a tremendous budget, which talks about investing in our economy, growing the economy, reinvesting and improving our returns for the people of Ontario.

### HYDRO ONE

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** My question is to the Minister of Energy. Minister, we've asked you questions about the Ombudsman's report into the shameful billing practices at Hydro One.

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** He's been on Twitter.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The deputy House leader, second time.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** So far, you've only paid lip service to the pain and suffering this disaster has caused hundreds of thousands of Ontarians.

As the energy critic for the PC caucus, my office was frequently copied on emails to you from Ontarians in crisis because of Hydro One's disastrous billing practices. This went on for months and months and months. Yet, it was the Ombudsman who had to step in because you didn't care.

Minister, is the reason why your response to this crisis has been so unsympathetic—and I should say pathetic—that the people who have suffered are largely from rural Ontario and not represented by your Liberal caucus?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** The response to the problems with the IT billing system have been dealt with over the course of time. There were serious issues that created serious inconvenience with customers across the province.

The reality is the Ombudsman did an investigation at the request, I think, of the critic, and he received 10,000 complaints, which is a lot. Some 3,500 of them were referred to Hydro One. Of those 3,500 referred to Hydro One, 98% of them have been resolved.

Yes, there was inconvenience, which Hydro One has apologized for, the government has apologized for, but there has been no financial loss to any of the customers affected. They have been reinstated and the money has been refunded to them. They have been given time to pay it if they didn't receive their bills—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** It was the member from Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington, but it certainly didn't come from you, the request to the Ombudsman.

Minister, no one believes for a second that if over 10,000 complaints had been made to the Ombudsman about Hydro Ottawa or Toronto Hydro that your ministry wouldn't have responded with lightning speed to the crisis with all the resources you have at your disposal.

Now the situation for Hydro One customers in rural Ontario is about to get even worse. When your budget

bill passes, no officer of this Legislature will be able to serve the interests of Hydro One customers because you are removing oversight.

Minister, Hydro One customers deserve a whole lot better than what you've been giving them. It brings your whole plan for selling Hydro One into question. Will you commit today to this Legislature to remove the sale of Hydro One from your budget bill?

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** What we're committing to today is to leave in the legislation the provision that we've put there that requires Hydro One to have an ombudsman. Not only do we require Hydro One to have an ombudsman, but we have retained the services of former Auditor General of Canada, Denis Desautels, to oversee the implementation of an ombudsman in Hydro One to ensure accountability and transparency. That is more than any other Toronto Stock Exchange company will have, and it will be meaningful, it will be accountable and it will be a responsible response.

### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** My question is to the Premier. The Premier might not know this, but I spend many evenings and weekends going door to door talking to my constituents. Whether they follow politics, whether they're Liberals or PCs or NDP, they're telling me they didn't get a say on the Premier's plan to sell Hydro One. They don't want the Premier to sell Hydro One.

Will the Premier agree to a referendum on her scheme to sell our Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I hope that the member opposite, when he is walking around Toronto—Danforth and he's talking about our plan to broaden the ownership of Hydro One, mentions that we are retaining 40% ownership. I hope he mentions that no entity or individual can own more than 10%, that the government will continue to own 40%. I hope he mentions that the regulatory protections that are in place now will remain in place. I hope he also mentions—because Toronto-Danforth is a very urban riding—that this was a difficult decision that was made because there is a need to invest in transit and transportation infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, and that, without that decision, we wouldn't be able to make those investments. I hope he mentions all that as he walks around Toronto—Danforth.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Peter Tabuns:** Well, I do let them know that bankers in Tokyo, New York and Frankfurt will get an opportunity to own their hydro system, absolutely. But Hydro One belongs to the people of Ontario, and selling it will affect every single one of them. They deserve a say. Will the Premier agree to listen to the people and hold a referendum before the Premier sells off Hydro One?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** To the Minister of Energy.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** I think it's important that we actually look at the record. Here's what the NDP leader



said just days after the last election: "The budget says in black and white that the government is looking at the sale of assets, 'including ... crown corporations, such as Ontario Power Generation, Hydro One and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario.'" That was July 9, 2014.

That was a budget that we introduced before the election and one that we campaigned on, Mr. Speaker. That budget was introduced before the election and afterwards. So the people of Ontario and the leader of the third party knew exactly what we were looking at, exactly what we were contemplating, and it's disingenuous for her to stand up and make the accusations that she's making here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I would ask the minister to withdraw.

**Hon. Bob Chiarelli:** Withdraw.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** New question.

### COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Minister, you have made it clear that your ministry is pursuing a mandate of transformation for the services it offers people living with disabilities. With these efforts, last week you were in my riding of Durham at Vos' Independent Grocers, announcing more resources for people with disabilities to achieve their employment goals. Vos' is known for their community stewardship and the opportunities they provide for persons with developmental disabilities.

During your visit, you announced that your ministry is contributing \$800,000 to help create a new Centre for Excellence in Employment Services, which will provide local community employers across the province with training and resources to find best practices, share information and create environments where individuals with disabilities can fully participate in the workforce. Minister, Durham was glad to hear it, but could you please provide the House with more details on how this new centre will assist individuals and employers?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I want to thank the member from Durham for his question. I think all members know that he's a very strong advocate for people with special needs.

An initiative like the Centre for Excellence in Employment Services is an example of the work that we are doing to create an inclusive society which allows for meaningful, competitive employment for those with developmental disabilities.

The centre for excellence will become a hub of knowledge and expertise in this province on the best ways to match the abilities of individuals to different types of employment. This is a critical factor for success.

The Centre for Excellence in Employment Services is one of 38 projects receiving funding from the employment and modernization fund. This fund is set to deliver \$15 million over three years and is part of our \$810-million investment in developmental services.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Granville Anderson:** Thank you, Minister. This new employment and modernization fund is a strong example of the way our government is using the innovative leaders in the developmental services sector to make a tangible difference for people with developmental disabilities and their families.

**1110**

However, this was not your only announcement. Last week, on your travels, you made a very significant investment in the violence-against-women sector. Our government is helping create a new women's shelter to serve Elgin county. Your ministry is investing more money to replace the existing shelter, to better meet the need for services. Their current location is a 98-year-old single-family home which has reached its capacity and has minimal outdoor space for children to play.

Minister, can you please explain to the House how this investment is supporting the government's commitment towards the reduction of violence against women?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Our investment of \$1.93 million is something that I'm very proud to speak about.

I want to acknowledge the amazing contribution of individuals from Elgin county who raised over a million dollars towards this project. The new Women's Place emergency shelter will provide a range of services to women and children who have experienced abuse. The new shelter will be almost five times the size of the existing shelter, with bedrooms for families and a large secured yard where children can play safely.

Protecting women and children from domestic violence is part of our government's plan to provide more security, protection and equal opportunity for all Ontarians. Currently, my ministry funds more than 2,000 beds annually, dedicated for use by women who experience abuse and their children.

This particular investment will help ensure that more women experiencing violence can live in safety, free from threat, fear or experience of violence and harassment.

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** My question is for the Premier. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment has heard from a number of witnesses on the devastating impacts of human trafficking. There is a very clear consensus from witnesses, who consistently said there is a severe lack of resources and support for women who want to leave the sex trade. One witness from Rising Angels stated that there needs to be a plan in place to offer these women a way out.

Premier, it is clear that human trafficking is a serious problem in Ontario. This is why I tabled a motion on May 14, which was unanimously supported, that called for the creation of a provincial task force that would offer a coordinated team of officers, crown attorneys and support services for victims. Premier, will you immediately strike the task force?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister responsible for women's issues.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I want to thank the member for the question as well as for her work on the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment—all the members who participate on that.

I think we all agree that human trafficking is a deplorable, deplorable activity. It's one I take extremely seriously, as the minister responsible for women's issues.

As I talked about in the House last week, we've already taken action on this issue, along with my colleague the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services. We invested over \$9 million over the next three years in our language interpreter service, so we can expand service to victims of sexual violence, including human trafficking. Last year, we provided \$225,000 in funding to the White Ribbon Campaign to help develop and promote resources to help end human trafficking.

We know there's more work to do, and I look forward to the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Minister, it's about coordination, which I said in the motion. These young women are moved from one community to another—particularly along Highway 401—where they are prostituted through online ads and social media. The efforts of law enforcement are hindered by multiple investigations into the same perpetrator for crimes in multiple areas.

Based on debate on my resolution in the chamber two weeks ago—

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Unanimously.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** We need a task force. It was passed unanimously. I'm asking you today: Will you take the necessary action by creating a provincial task force to combat human trafficking here in Ontario?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I couldn't agree more that addressing this very serious issue of human trafficking indeed requires a coordination across government—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** —so, a whole-government approach—the Attorney General, the minister of safety and corrections and the Ontario Women's Directorate. We are working together to help eliminate human trafficking.

I congratulate you on receiving unanimous consent on your motion on human trafficking issues. I'm looking forward to working with all parties on this.

As you know, we have a permanent round table on sexual violence and harassment. That involves representation from the entire sector around sexual violence. The issue of human trafficking, I'm sure, will be addressed there, as it is in your select committee. I really look forward to more work in this area.

#### TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTES

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** My question is to the Premier. Our schools have been thrown into chaos because of this

Liberal government's chronic underfunding of our children's education. The chaos is only growing as the Premier's hand-picked Minister of Education fails to do her job and negotiate a deal with teachers.

Instead of protecting our schools by getting a deal done, the minister is more focused on cutting funding for our kids. She cut \$250 million last year. She's cutting \$36 million from textbooks and supplies this year. She's planning even deeper cuts to come. Now the minister is repeating her mistakes by dragging her feet on talks with education support workers, who have wanted to negotiate since last June. That's almost a year, Premier.

When will the Premier ask the Minister of Education to resign and appoint a minister who knows how to do the job?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** I just say to the member opposite that there has been negotiating going on. I understand that there are some discussions that haven't taken place yet, but they will. As I said, we are engaged in negotiating right now.

It's important that we have that collective bargaining process, that we find those deals at the table with the education workers. Whether they're teachers or whether they're support workers, they are all critical to the education of our children. The Minister of Education is actively engaged in those negotiations right now.

What I would say to the third party is that there's a piece of legislation in front of us that will make sure that kids stay in school. It's very clear that that piece of legislation needs to pass in order for kids to be in school. I hope that they will be lending their support to that legislation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Back to the Premier: It was your mess that created where we are now, so you guys can fix it.

The Minister of Education is creating more chaos in our children's schools by failing to do her job. Rather than negotiating a deal with teachers, she's cutting what matters most: \$250 million cut last year; 88 schools closed since 2011; and millions cut from special education in schools right across this province.

Now, we know that this Liberal government has put class size caps on the table, and families know that means one thing. It means even bigger class sizes and even less support for the students who need it most.

The Minister of Education is creating chaos for students, and she needs to be fired today. When will the Premier do the right thing and fire the Minister of Education?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Education.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** We had 72,000 students who were out of school. I agree: That was chaotic. But it was this party that didn't want to pass the legislation to end that strike. Fortunately, the Ontario Labour Relations—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Finish, please.

**Hon. Liz Sandals:** Fortunately, the Ontario Labour Relations Board ruled that it was an unlawful strike. I'm



delighted to report that yesterday we had 72,000 students back in schools. Their very professional teachers were back there in the classrooms doing their job teaching.

My question is, are we going to allow that strike to resume on June 10, or are we going to pass the legislation that keeps—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

### OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

**Mr. Grant Crack:** My question is for the Minister of Transportation. In November 2013, not only was I proud but I was also delighted to represent rural Ontario when I introduced a motion that sought to update Ontario's regulatory framework for off-road vehicles, specifically regulation 316/03. I want to thank all members of this House for the unanimous support they gave me on this particular initiative.

But as it stands, only single-rider ATVs may travel along certain roads in Ontario, as determined by the province and our municipal partners. This outdated regulation does not consider new models of off-road vehicles such as two-ups and side-by-sides, which are used by many of my constituents in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell and across the province.

1120

I understand the minister has conducted consultations. I'm asking the minister this morning, could he please update—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Minister of Transportation.

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** I want to begin by thanking the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell for his question, but also I want to say that that member has been an exceptionally strong advocate for his community. That's why he was the first person to introduce a motion on this very important issue. That member understood that those living in northern and rural municipalities depend on ATVs and ORVs for tourism and local travel.

When I became minister, I committed to a collaborative approach to developing solutions for this issue. That's why MTO's been consulting with both the public and stakeholders on updates to the regulatory framework for ORVs. In-person consultations were held on January 15 and 16, and over 30 different stakeholder groups took part. In addition, proposals were posted to both the regulatory registry and the Environmental Registry until April 13, 2015.

I want to assure the member that the stakeholder feedback has been incredibly positive, and I appreciate the member's continued advocacy on this issue.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Mr. Grant Crack:** I want to thank the minister for his solid and unwavering support on moving Bill 31 through this House. I'm very happy to hear we've received a lot of positive feedback throughout the consultation process.

But as I indicated earlier, many of my constituents in Glengarry–Prescott–Russell rely on ATVs and ORVs for

tourism, travel and recreation. I'd like to take this opportunity to officially invite the minister to my riding of Glengarry–Prescott–Russell to see exactly how useful these vehicles are to those in my riding and across Ontario.

While it's important that we update the existing regulations, Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer, also contains provisions relating to off-road vehicles. Could the minister please tell the members of this House more about the off-road vehicle provisions within our government and our road safety regulations?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Once again, I want to thank that member not only for his advocacy but also for his eloquence in the House here today.

Many members of this House have already contributed to debate on Bill 31. This bill not only serves to protect drivers on our roads, it also introduces a number of provisions that will help keep pedestrians and cyclists safe in Ontario. Bill 31, if passed, will also eliminate the prescriptive definition of low pressure bearing tires that could affect the future of off-road vehicles bylaw authorities in municipalities.

As I've said many times in the House, my number one priority is road safety. The provisions in Bill 31 are a key step forward on this issue. However, I hope to be able to provide further updates on off-road vehicles soon.

I should add that members on this side, including those from Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Northumberland–Quinte West, Sudbury and others, have long been champions with that member on this important issue.

### VACCINATIONS

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** My question is to the Minister of Health. Minister, last month, I spoke to you about one of my constituents who was looking for help regarding her son's vaccination for meningitis. Peel Public Health told Ms. May that her son would have to get a second shot because he was vaccinated one day before his first birthday—one day, Minister.

There comes a point when common sense trumps memos and directives. Will you intervene with Peel Public Health to ensure Ms. May's child doesn't have to get a second shot?

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** I appreciate this question. It's unfortunate that an error was made by the practising primary care provider in this case where that vaccination, I understand—I think there were two that were delivered prematurely.

The law requires certain vaccinations prior to school entry, and I know the member opposite agrees with this policy. It's important. It's about the safety of our children as they grow into adults. It's because the evidence is there that vaccinations protect lives. It's very effective.

Now, with regard to this specific vaccination, I know that Peel Public Health, the ministry and Public Health Ontario reviewed the guidelines that are available, and there's a reason—I'll get into it in the supplementary—why it's important that we wait till that first year, that

first birthday before we vaccinate against MMR—measles, mumps and rubella—as well as meningitis, which are the vaccines in question.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Sylvia Jones:** Minister, I'm not trying to assign blame. I'm trying to solve a problem.

I have a second family. Cheryl Fulcher has been warned that her son will be suspended from school because he got his shot two days before his first birthday. As Cheryl says, "They kept saying 'it's less effective if it's before the first birthday,' and I'm thinking, 'It's two days!'"

I'm not a physician, but I have a hard time believing that the efficacy of these vaccinations decreases so dramatically in a day or two that it would warrant the additional cost to the health care system and the inconvenience to these families.

Please intervene on behalf of these two families and stop the madness for one or two days.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** Again, this isn't about threatening suspension. This is about the safety of the child.

It's an interesting coincidence, actually, that my PhD in public health at Oxford University was granted based on a thesis that I did on immunization of children in their first year of life, and the timing of the administration of the vaccine. The science is obvious and present. It's federal legislation—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** —and it's Ontario legislation and guidelines as well—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Order.

**Hon. Eric Hoskins:** —it's the science.

Children, when they're born, have maternal antibodies that protect them against getting these diseases. Those antibodies wane over time. Science around the world—whether it's the World Health Organization, the federal health agency or Ontario—agrees that it is premature to put that child at risk, if you're vaccinating them prior to one year of age.

That is the policy across this country, Mr. Speaker. It's there for a reason: It's to protect the safety of the child.

#### PAN AM GAMES

**Mr. Paul Miller:** My question is to the Premier. The Toronto 2015 budget for revenues, marketing and ceremonies has gone up from \$106 million in 2013 to \$139 million last year to \$157 million last Friday. That's a 48% increase in two years in the budget to attract people to the games. Why is that, and are they having trouble? That's one question.

Speaker, with all honesty, if they sold out every seat, the total ticket revenue from the entire games wouldn't cover those extra marketing costs.

Premier, how much extra revenue is the \$51 million in new spending expected to bring in? Is it, in fact, less than the \$51 million they've spent?

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton—Lawrence.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** Have you even checked to see?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister responsible for the Pan Am Games.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** I'm happy to take this question. I was happy, also, to join the member opposite as we officially opened the Hamilton stadium last week. I was very proud of that. We had the mayor out; we had city councillors out. It was an incredible event.

Mr. Speaker, I have to speak—

*Interjections.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** It's kind of odd that I have to ask the government side to be quiet while the answer is being put.

Thank you.

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** The member opposite knows that these games are about selling tickets; they are about supporting our athletes. But they're also about supporting our infrastructure for the future. Going out to a place like Hamilton, knowing that there's a game being played in Hamilton this weekend, England versus Canada—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. Supplementary?

**Mr. Paul Miller:** The operating budget is what we're all worried about, Minister, and we don't know what the final bill will be until after the games.

Year after year, we have seen consistent increases in six of the eight lines in the operating budget: 25%, 27% and 32%. But all these cost overruns have been magically offset by two tricks—two tricks.

First, they have halved the budget—

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Eglinton—Lawrence, second time—and stop.

Please finish.

**Mr. Paul Miller:** First, they have halved the budget for the essential services, such as security, which is quite a trick since security costs have doubled in the last two years. Second, they've practically wiped out their contingency funds, either because they've blown through it or because they needed to make the overall numbers look good.

Premier, if these games go \$200 million over budget, will you still be paying those executive bonuses?

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** What the member opposite won't tell you is, when it comes to infrastructure, we're \$57.5 million under budget. Those are the things they won't tell you about.

In addition to that—and I spoke about this yesterday—we've held very detailed technical briefings for the member opposite, for both critics, and I don't think I've seen the member show up once.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton East—Stoney Creek—while I'm speaking—is warned.

Finish, please.



1130

**Hon. Michael Coteau:** We put forward these technical briefings to update our members in this House—the critics opposite—to provide that detailed information. On one side, he is saying we're not doing enough to sell tickets, and on the other side, he's now saying we're spending too much to advertise. I don't know where the NDP sits when it comes to the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games, but on this side of the House, we believe in our—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

New question.

## CONDOMINIUM LEGISLATION

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** My question is to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services. Yesterday, our government introduced legislation that will add fairness and accountability to the condo sector. As a person who does live in a condo, I've heard extensively from my neighbours and also from constituents in Kitchener Centre about the need for better oversight of their relationship with condo boards.

Modernizing our condo law will be a source of relief to the 1.3 million people in Ontario who do live in condos. It's astounding that 50% of the new houses being built in Ontario today are condos. Our government is committed to improving this robust sector of the housing market, which already is valued at \$43 billion and employs over 300,000 Ontarians every year.

Can the Minister of Government and Consumer Services please inform us about the proposed protection of condo owners act?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** I want to thank the member from Kitchener Centre for her question and for her advocacy for condo owners. This is, in fact, great news for Ontarians. Buying a condo is a significant investment; in fact, maybe the largest purchase in an individual's lifetime. With the many changes in the condo sector over the last 17 years, it's critical that we modernize the Condominium Act to address current concerns.

Through our comprehensive public outreach process and an expert panel, we received over 2,200 submissions from condo owners, developers, lawyers, property managers, agents and members of the public. The act incorporates key recommendations protecting the investment of condo owners and ensuring that they're treated fairly with consistent standards administered by licensed and qualified condo managers.

By giving owners better information on their rights and responsibilities, as well as creating new governance requirements, we are making significant changes to improve this sector's legislation.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary?

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** I'd like to thank the Minister of Government and Consumer Services for the informative response, and his ministry for the work they are doing on this very important issue. I understand that the act is going to allow for the creation of what is called delegated administrative authorities.

One is going to license condo managers, making sure they have the training and qualifications to effectively manage these organizations. The second proposed delegated administrative authority is going to provide a modern, cost-effective dispute resolution system that is going to see that issues are resolved faster, and also do this at a much lower cost, saving condo owners tens of thousands of dollars compared to the current legal process.

Can the minister please speak to the creation of these delegated administrative authorities, and how they're going to add accountability and fairness for condo owners in Ontario?

**Hon. David Orazietti:** Again, thank you to the member from Kitchener Centre for the question.

The creation of the new delegated administrative authorities is a critical step in adding accountability and oversight to this sector. Delegated authorities have a strong track record of overseeing consumer protection. In particular, these two new delegated authorities will include specific measures like salary disclosure and a process for freedom-of-information requests. They will be reporting to the Auditor General through oversight, and the ministry will be selecting the chair of the board, as well as 49% of the members who make up this board.

The condo authority, in addition to providing faster, cost-effective dispute resolution, will provide training for condo board directors, and create standards, forms and stronger rules for record retention to prevent some of these disputes before they even happen.

This legislation is a game-changer for the condo owners in this province, and I look forward to working with members of this House to see this legislation move forward.

## EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Mr. Bill Walker:** My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. Earning an income doesn't come easily for a person with a disability. A person who is deaf or using a wheelchair faces all kinds of barriers in the workplace and beyond. As such, I think it's fair that Ontario recognizes this challenge and supports them in their work efforts with the monthly \$100 Work-Related Benefit. The Work-Related Benefit helps many gain employment, retain employment and, equally important, feel good about being able to contribute to their community and be included in our society. Clearly you disagree, Minister, which is why you're moving ahead with plans to cut the ODSP Work-Related Benefit.

Minister, can you please explain why you're cutting job opportunities for people with disabilities?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** Thank you to the member for Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound for the question. Certainly our government does agree that we need to ensure that those with disabilities have every opportunity to participate in the workplace.

Obviously, along with my colleague the Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, we are working very hard in terms of accessibility

opportunities, and there are many different initiatives that our government, in fact, is taking. In relation to the employment-related benefit and the idea that our government did propose to fold all seven existing employment-related benefits into one, including the Work-Related Benefit, I'm sure the member is aware that we have delayed implementation of that particular benefit at this time.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Supplementary.

**Mr. Bill Walker:** Back to the Minister of Community and Social Services: I'm glad that you are actually delaying it, but what we need you to do is ensure that you're not going to cut that out. People in my office came and said, "This will be the difference between me keeping a job or not keeping a job," so we need to look at that.

You've used the words "streamlining" and "flexibility" as code words during your messy SAMS implementation that left vulnerable people with payment delays and stress. If streamlining means cutting job opportunities for people with disabilities, then you should back down now and not implement that cut. By cutting the Work-Related Benefit, you're forcing people with disabilities to face a very difficult choice: to be trapped at home and not work, meaning they'll need much more in the way of support from your government, or risk injury or even death by working without adequate supports to address their health-related needs.

Minister, your actions are unjustifiable. They are discriminatory to people with disabilities. You need to reverse your decision. Will you please do that?

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** I'm sure that my critic is well aware that one of the mandates given to me by our Premier is social assistance reform, and we will be embarking on that very shortly in terms of consultations. This is a very complex process and it will represent changes for clients.

*Interjection.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Hamilton Mountain, second time.

**Hon. Helena Jaczek:** We're going to look at the employment-related benefit in conjunction with social assistance reform. At this point in time, we are not implementing the change that was previously proposed and we remain committed to minimizing any negative impacts on any changes that we make, especially as it relates to employment.

We have introduced a number of measures to improve employment outcomes for those on social assistance so that individuals receiving social assistance can now earn up to \$200 per month without having their monthly benefits impacted. Beyond \$200, for every dollar earned, their monthly benefits will be—

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. New question.

## EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** My question is to the Premier. Two weeks ago, the Ontario Self-Employment Benefit

program, or OSEB, was arbitrarily cancelled, with no warning, no notice and no consultation.

In my community, the OSEB program has launched hundreds of successful small businesses, creating jobs for many more Londoners and pumping millions into the local economy. The OSEB program filled a unique role by supporting people on EI to become successful entrepreneurs.

Premier, how can your government justify cancelling a program that has helped hundreds of unemployed Londoners to start small businesses and create jobs, and has already been rigorously evaluated as successful?

**Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne:** Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

**Hon. Reza Moridi:** I want to thank the member for that question.

Ontario's skilled workers are our greatest asset. Our Premier often refers to the people of Ontario, saying that the people of Ontario are our greatest assets. That's why our government has been investing in our people.

Every year we invest about \$1.2 billion through Employment Ontario's various programs and services to about one million Ontarians who benefit from the services we offer in the government.

This program, the Ontario Self-Employment Benefit program, has been a very costly program. That's why we have been reviewing it and we have decided to stop that program and divert the funds to another program. I will speak more on the specifics of this in the supplementary.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you.

1140

## VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Northumberland—Quinte West on a point of order.

**Mr. Lou Rinaldi:** Point of order, Speaker—they got here late. Allow me to introduce my fellow Rotarians from the Brighton Rotary Club in the very back row in the west gallery. Welcome.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member from Davenport on a point of order.

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** Point of order: I'd like to welcome—they arrived a little bit late to the Legislature here today—delegates from the Sporting Clube de Portugal. With us here today: board member and head of sporting clubhouse, Mr. Bruno de Mascarenhas; youth technical director, Mr. Virgilio Lopes; the head of grassroots, Mr. Luis Dias; technical director of sporting academies, Mr. Nuno Figueiredo; as well as technical director of Sporting Football Club of Toronto, Mr. Pedro Dias. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Also, with us here today, members from The Stop Community Food Centre—a wonderful organization in my riding.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for Mississauga—Streetsville on a point of order.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I would also like to introduce in the members' east gallery Mr. Manraj Fumrah, our sum-



mer student in our constituency office in Mississauga–Streetsville.

## DEFERRED VOTES

### ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT LA LOI SUR LA SOCIÉTÉ DE PROTECTION DES ANIMAUX DE L'ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 80, An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care / Projet de loi 80, Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario et la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche en ce qui concerne la possession et l'élevage d'épaulards ainsi que les exigences administratives relatives aux soins dispensés aux animaux.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1141 to 1146.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Would all members please take their seats?

On May 27, 2015, Mr. Naqvi moved third reading of Bill 80.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Milczyn, Peter Z.
Anderson, Granville	French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Baker, Yvan	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Balkissoon, Bas	Gretzky, Lisa	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hoggarth, Ann	Natyshak, Taras
Bisson, Gilles	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziatti, David
Bradley, James J.	Hoskins, Eric	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Hunter, Mitzie	Qaadi, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Jaczek, Helena	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Kiwala, Sophie	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Sattler, Peggy
Crack, Grant	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Leal, Jeff	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	MacCharles, Tracy	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Malhi, Harinder	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Mantha, Michael	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martins, Cristina	Vanthof, John
DiNovo, Cheri	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	McGarry, Kathryn	Wynne, Kathleen O.
Fife, Catherine	McMahon, Eleanor	Zimmer, David
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	McMeekin, Ted	
Forster, Cindy	Meilleur, Madeleine	

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Bailey, Robert	Jones, Sylvia	Scott, Laurie
Clark, Steve	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dunlop, Garfield	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Fedeli, Victor	Miller, Norm	Wilson, Jim
Hardeman, Ernie	Munro, Julia	Yakubuski, John
Hillier, Randy	Pettapiece, Randy	Yurek, Jeff

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 74; the nays are 18.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

### ONTARIO IMMIGRATION ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 SUR L'IMMIGRATION EN ONTARIO

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 49, An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Projet de loi 49, Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1150 to 1151.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** On May 12, 2015, Mr. Chan moved third reading of Bill 49. All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	French, Jennifer K.	Miller, Paul
Anderson, Granville	Gélinas, France	Moridi, Reza
Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Bailey, Robert	Gretzky, Lisa	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Hardeman, Ernie	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Balkissoon, Bas	Hatfield, Percy	Naqvi, Yasir
Ballard, Chris	Hoggarth, Ann	Natyshak, Taras
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Horwath, Andrea	Oraziatti, David
Bisson, Gilles	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Hunter, Mitzie	Rinaldi, Lou
Chan, Michael	Jaczek, Helena	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Kiwala, Sophie	Sattler, Peggy
Colle, Mike	Kwinter, Monte	Scott, Laurie
Coteau, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sergio, Mario
Crack, Grant	Leal, Jeff	Singh, Jagmeet
Damerla, Dipika	MacCharles, Tracy	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Malhi, Harinder	Tabuns, Peter
Delaney, Bob	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Dhillon, Vic	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Dickson, Joe	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
DiNovo, Cheri	Matthews, Deborah	Vanthof, John
Dong, Han	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Duguid, Brad	McDonnell, Jim	Walker, Bill
Dunlop, Garfield	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Fedeli, Victor	McMahon, Eleanor	

Fife, Catherine  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Forster, Cindy  
Fraser, John

McMeekin, Ted  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Miller, Norm

Wong, Soo  
Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakabuski, John  
Zimmer, David

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** All those opposed, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 90; the nays are 0.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I declare the motion carried.

Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** There are no further deferred votes. This House stands recessed until 1 p.m. this afternoon.

*The House recessed from 1154 to 1300.*

## INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Introduction of guests?

I'm looking for the member from Eglinton–Lawrence to do introductions of guests. I'm just ragging the puck a little bit because I know they're on their way in.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** They're just getting through the security system.

I'll just begin my introduction here. Mr. Speaker, today we have some special guests. They're here with an organization called FAST. It's a foundation to help bring awareness and find a cure for Angelman syndrome. We have with us today Na'ama Uzan, who's the founder of the Angelman syndrome lemonade stand initiative. Na'ama has raised \$50,000 by their lemonade stand to help her brother Nadav, who is diagnosed with Angelman syndrome. Na'ama is here; she's five years old. There's Na'ama there.

Also, Na'ama's mom is here, Ru Uzan, who is a spokesman for the foundation. Na'ama's dad, David Uzan, is here. Also, her grandparents are here, her bubbes and her zaydes are here on both sides.

I'd like to welcome Na'ama Uzan, the superstar fundraiser, and her family for being with us here today.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Thank you. She's going to do one at my house—a lemonade stand.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### PESTICIDES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** I rise today to thank the members from Ottawa–Orléans as well as Toronto–Danforth because this morning they sponsored a breakfast whereby we heard one side of the neonicotinoid issue in Ontario. The speaker was from France and he shared a lot of good information, but I want to make sure that in this House we have balance in information that we access and we understand, in order to make informed decisions.

I just want to share with everyone that right now, here in Ontario, many farmers are being left in the dark. Regulations are not clear and this government would not give the details that farmers are looking for. I recently read an article by Lyndsey Smith—actually, it was published just yesterday, May 27. This reporter was fiercely trying to find information and get answers on neonic regulations. The reporter contacted the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, OMAFRA, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change—the minister's office directly—all to no avail. The worst case scenario was concluded by the reporter in saying that “the MOECC is really out to get pesticide use in agriculture” but the “best case scenario,” Speaker, is that “they're incompetent.”

Ontario farmers just ask that their industry be predictable, bankable and sustainable, and we need answers before July 1.

### SCHOOL DRESS CODES

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I rise today as MPP for London West and NDP women's issues critic to applaud the leadership of two young women, Laura Anderson, from my community of London, and Alexi Halket from Etobicoke. These secondary school students are challenging sexist attitudes and rape culture by questioning their school dress codes. Both were sent home from school this week for wearing clothing that school officials said violated their school dress codes—a tank top in Laura's case and a crop top in Alexi's. In response, solidarity protests by their female and male peers were organized at both schools and social media hashtags #MyBodyMyBusiness and #CropTopDay have gone viral.

It is fitting that public and media attention is being focused on this issue during the month of May, Sexual Assault Prevention Month. These young women and their supporters point out that some school dress codes may perpetuate rape culture by objectifying and oversexualizing women's bodies and stereotyping men as sexual animals unable to control themselves at the sight of a woman's bare shoulder or midriff. They may perpetuate victim blaming by conveying the message that it is women who must be responsible for keeping men at bay.

Let's teach boys to treat girls as peers instead of sexual objects and look for other ways to teach students about appropriate dress in the workplace.

### KITCHENER PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** It gives me great pleasure to share with you news today from my riding of Kitchener Centre, and it concerns our main public library, which is a very much valued community resource.

Named as the new chief executive officer is Mary Chevreau, who has lived in our region since 1989 and has served on the board and the library foundation. She said that this is “such a great opportunity,” adding that the library that we used to use as kids is certainly not the library of today or what we're going to see in the future.



Back in 1884, when our first free public library opened its doors, the collection included 3,000 books and a reading room that had newspapers and periodicals. Today, the main branch on Queen Street, after a \$40-million renovation project, supported in part by our province, features a two-storey atrium, a children's library, computers, a digital media lab, a 3D printer, make-your-own-music stations, a spectacular public art installation at the entrance and, of course, lots of books.

Ms. Chevreau has said that one of her goals as the new CEO is to find ways to attract more people to the library. Soon they're going to launch an interactive survey to learn what people want to experience at our library.

Mr. Speaker, it's still one of the best deals anywhere. A free library card can open a world of knowledge to anyone of any age.

I wish her and the staff at KPL much success.

### COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**Mr. Garfield Dunlop:** I can't tell you how disappointed I am today to learn that the Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities has denied an application by Durham College and RESCON for training delivery agency status for tower crane operators at Durham College. This would have introduced competition into the system. It would have been at absolutely no cost whatsoever to the province of Ontario, the government of Ontario, and it would have improved safety and actually give competition to this very valued trade. Apparently, the minister has denied it, and there will be no appeal.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker: This is wrong. As the community college system turns 50 years old in 2017, they've actually created hundreds of thousands of jobs, and they are the leading training agency for the province of Ontario, yet we've got a minister who doesn't want to add competition to the system. One union, the power engineers, is taking credit for the whole program. They do it under their terms, and there's no competition for this very valued industry.

I want to thank Durham President Don Lovisa and Richard Lyall, executive director of RESCON. I can tell those folks that this fight is a long way from over. We will not put up with this kind of nonsense. This is completely wrong in our community college system in Ontario, and I hope everyone will fight this all the way.

### HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I rise today to say how proud I am of the high school students in my riding, the riding of Sudbury, as well as Algoma-Manitoulin, who rose and organized themselves in reaction to the recent teachers' strike. My office was originally contacted by a student of Nickel Belt, who was on strike, on Tuesday afternoon about a petition that, at the time, over 2,600 students had signed.

The petition was written by a new student organization that call themselves Ontario Students Right to be Heard. The petition called on the Ontario government to make

school boards negotiate and respect the OSSTF teachers' right to strike. Their request was simple: No to back-to-work legislation; yes to negotiation. They know that back-to-work legislation is a quick fix that leads to future disruption.

It was a pleasure to introduce their petition. It stood at 2,600 signatures then; it is now at over 5,400 signatures.

### 1310

In turbulent times, sometimes leaders are born. Listen to these names: Spencer Pylatuk and Greg Lee from Lo-Ellen Park; Benjamin MacKenzie and Anna-Lisa Shandro from Sudbury Secondary; Mack McGrady from Barrydowne College; Daneen Maher from Espanola High; Max Chapman from Manitoulin Secondary; Baylee MacInnis and Phoenix Ellis from Lockerby Composite; and Vincent Leduc from Confederation Secondary. Congratulations to these young people.

### RICH GRIFFIN

**Mr. Glenn Thibeault:** I rise today to pay tribute to a bright Sudburian who our community lost tragically and unexpectedly this past weekend.

Rich Griffin packed a lot of life into his 52 years on Earth. Most importantly, he was an incredible father to five-year-old Zoe, and he was a loving husband to his wife, Nancy. The two had lived what many called a legendary love story. To them both, our deepest condolences.

I knew Rich as a friend, and most of us knew him as the radio host for KiSS 105.3 in Sudbury. Mr. Speaker, it seems like just three weeks ago that we were at the Father Daughter Ball raising money for kids with cancer in northern Ontario, and as usual, Rich and Gary were the hosts. Rich was there having fun and dancing and enjoying himself with all of the girls in attendance.

Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" For Rich Griffin, the answer was clear: He gave selflessly. This is a man who went above and beyond his work duties and helped a number of community organizations by hosting their events and fundraisers. He was always there to offer help and advice, and sometimes just to listen.

In typical Rich fashion, his last act on Earth was to give one more time as an organ donor. His final gift will help eight people live better lives. This is who this wonderful man was. Sudbury is truly a lesser place without him.

While our community is mourning the loss of a wonderful human being and a committed father and husband, we will also celebrate the precious years we did have with Rich. On behalf of Sudbury, I honour and remember him today.

### HYDRO ONE

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** This week Ontario Ombudsman André Marin released his much-anticipated report on Hydro One's billing practices.

The reported highlighted what residents in my riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock have experienced first-hand, that Hydro One issued faulty bills to more than 100,000 customers. They mishandled the problem and tried to cover it up. For nearly two years, customers have struggled with pathetic customer service while trying to correct or pay their hydro bills.

Instead of rapidly fixing the problem, Hydro One deliberately kept the situation under wraps while the Minister of Energy turned a blind eye, despite warnings and warnings like my open letter in January of last year to him. The total cost to fix the botched revamp of Hydro One's billing system rang in at \$88.3 million, which will, sadly, be passed along to ratepayers.

The Ombudsman's report also revealed that Mr. Marin was misled and lied to by Hydro One officials as he investigated billing problems. That is why the Ontario PCs have asked the Ontario Provincial Police to conduct an investigation into the serious breaches of conduct committed by employees of Hydro One.

The CEO of Hydro One and the Minister of Energy have both claimed that all of the problems impacting the billing process have been resolved. However, that is not the case. My constituency office continues to receive and investigate new or recurring complaints. The Ombudsman tweeted that his office has already received 90 new complaints since the report's release on Monday.

This government has been consistently missing in action, and my constituents don't want to take it anymore.

#### ASIAN AND SOUTH ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today and talk about a very special month-long celebration that has been going on in our province for the last few days.

May is Asian and South Asian Heritage Month in Ontario. It's a time to take a moment and remember our roots, and it's a time to celebrate—celebrate our diversity, our amazing province, and the contributions of Canadians of South Asian and Asian descent.

Today, our Asian and South Asian communities number close to two million people and are made up of people from all around the world. They speak many languages, practise many religions and have many ethnicities.

These various communities may have distinct identities, yet together—together—their contributions have helped to define our country, our province and our region's rich cultural identity. But it's not just about the numbers. The contributions of these communities to our province in business, science, culture, civic life and more are immeasurable, and we are stronger for it.

Mr. Speaker, our diversity makes us stronger as a region and as a province. It's the thread that binds us together and forms the amazing tapestry that we know as Ontario. That's why I was so pleased to host a reception for Halton's South Asian community at my constituency

office last Friday, and then, on Sunday, to visit one of our local gurdwaras. It was great to see so many familiar faces and to celebrate the way that these communities have helped to transform our province.

Asian and South Asian Heritage Month is a perfect time to recognize the contributions of these communities, and I'm glad to have been able to participate in this month-long celebration.

#### ANGELMAN SYNDROME

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Later today I'm introducing a private member's bill, and it's a very important private member's bill. It will be putting forth an initiative to mark February 15 as Angelman Syndrome Day in Ontario.

With us today in the gallery we have Na'ama Uzan, who is five years of age. Her brother Nadav has been diagnosed with Angelman syndrome. What she did was she took it upon herself to set up a lemonade stand—and many lemonade stands—to help raise money for research into Angelman syndrome. Young Na'ama has raised over \$50,000.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Mike Colle:** I appreciate the support of all members of the House, because this is the kind of initiative we could all support.

We're just trying to bring awareness to this syndrome. Dr. Weeber from the University of South Florida, who we spoke to, said that the cure is very close. They have identified the chromosome. It's chromosome 15. If we can get some research dollars to the doctors, we can help a lot of children like Na'ama's older brother, Nadav, who has it. That's why we're here today, and we'll be introducing that bill later on.

#### VISITORS

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Point of order from the member from Beaches-East York.

**Mr. Arthur Potts:** It gives me great pleasure; I would like to recognize two outstanding executives with a company called Spin VFX. They help bring us all the special effects in movies that you see on the big screen. We have Neishaw Ali and Kenny Girdharry. Thank you, and welcome to Queen's Park.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Welcome.

Again, I thank all members for their statements.

#### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

##### STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** I beg leave to present a report on health human resources from the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and move the adoption of its recommendations.



**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Mr. Hardeman presents the committee's report and moves adoption of its recommendations. Does the member wish to make a short statement?

**Mr. Ernie Hardeman:** As Chair of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, I'm pleased to table the committee's report today, entitled *Health Human Resources—Section 3.02 of the 2013 Annual Report of the Auditor General of Ontario*.

I would like to thank the permanent membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts: Lisa MacLeod as Vice-Chair, Han Dong, John Fraser, Percy Hatfield, Harinder Malhi, Julia Munro, Arthur Potts and Lou Rinaldi.

The committee extends its appreciation to officials from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and HealthForceOntario for their attendance at the hearings. The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided during the hearings and report-writing deliberations by the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario, the Clerk of the Committee and staff in the legislative research service for the province of Ontario.

With that, I move adjournment of the debate.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*Debate adjourned.*

1320

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### LISTENING TO ONTARIANS ACT (HYDRO ONE AND OTHER ELECTRICITY ASSETS), 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA NÉCESSITÉ D'ÊTRE À L'ÉCOUTE DES ONTARIENS (HYDRO ONE ET AUTRES ÉLÉMENTS D'ACTIF LIÉS À L'ÉLECTRICITÉ)

Ms. Horwath moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 107, An Act to require a referendum before the disposition of the Crown's electricity assets / *Projet de loi 107, Loi exigeant la tenue d'un référendum préalablement à la disposition des éléments d'actif de la Couronne liés à l'électricité.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**M<sup>me</sup> Andrea Horwath:** Merci, monsieur le Président. Le projet de loi modifie la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité afin d'exiger la tenue d'un référendum avant que la Couronne vende ses intérêts dans des personnes morales qui transportent, distribuent, produisent ou vendent au détail de l'électricité, notamment Hydro One Inc. Les règles énoncées dans la Loi de 1999 sur la protection des contribuables à l'égard d'un référendum tenu sous le

régime de cette loi s'appliquent à un référendum tenu sous le régime de la Loi de 1998 sur l'électricité.

Speaker, this legislation basically amends the Electricity Act, 1998, to require a referendum before the crown sells the crown's interest in corporations that transmit, distribute, generate or retail electricity, including Hydro One, Inc. The rules in the Taxpayer Protection Act, 1999, respecting a referendum under that act apply to a referendum under the Electricity Act, 1998.

### ANGELMAN SYNDROME DAY ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LE JOUR DU SYNDROME D'ANGELMAN

Mr. Colle moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 108, An Act to proclaim February 15 as Angelman Syndrome Day / *Projet de loi 108, Loi proclamant le 15 février Jour du syndrome d'Angelman.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The member for a short statement.

**Mr. Mike Colle:** Mr. Speaker, I am introducing this bill in order to bring public attention and awareness to this disease, Angelman syndrome. As a result of the great work of Na'ama Uzan, who has raised \$50,000 towards bringing awareness, this bill and the direction of this bill will work with the family and with Na'ama Uzan to let us all know about this syndrome so we can raise more research dollars and find the cure for Angelman syndrome. Hopefully, in some small way, this will help all these children who suffer from this syndrome.

### EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE L'EMPLOI ET LES RELATIONS DE TRAVAIL

Mr. Flynn moved first reading of the following bill:

Bill 109, An Act to amend various statutes with respect to employment and labour / *Projet de loi 109, Loi modifiant diverses lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi et les relations de travail.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry? Carried.

*First reading agreed to.*

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister for a short statement.

**Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn:** I'm happy to rise to introduce the Employment and Labour Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015, which, if passed, will bring increased fairness and efficiency for working people in our province.

The proposed legislation would promote increased fairness and protection for injured workers by amending the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

It will also amend the Public Sector Labour Relations Transition Act, 1997, to help reduce the potential for disruption and delay following events in the broader public sector to which the act applies, an example being amalgamation or restructuring.

It would also amend the Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997, to bring it into greater alignment with the Labour Relations Act, 1995.

Strengthening protections for workers while supporting business is part of our government's plan to build Ontario up and create that just society we all want.

## MOTIONS

### APPOINTMENT OF OMBUDSMAN

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the extension of the appointment of André Marin as the Ombudsman for the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The Minister of Children and Youth Services is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council,

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario now assembled, request an extension of the appointment of André Marin as Ombudsman for the province of Ontario to September 14, 2015, or until the effective date of the appointment of a permanent Ombudsman on an address of the assembly, whichever comes first, as provided in the Ombudsman Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. O.6, to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act."

And that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. MacCharles moves that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council,

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario now assembled, request an extension of the appointment of André Marin as Ombudsman for the province of Ontario to September 14, 2015, or until the effective date of the appointment of a permanent Ombudsman on an address of the assembly—

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Dispense. Do we agree? Agreed. Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I seek unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice respecting the appointment of Ellen Schwartzel as temporary Environmental Commissioner for the province of Ontario.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister seeks unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I move that an humble address be presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council,

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario now assembled, request the appointment of Ellen Schwartzel as temporary Environmental Commissioner for the province of Ontario, as provided in the Environmental Bill of Rights act, to hold office under the terms and conditions of the said act, commencing May 19, 2015, until September 14, 2015, or until the effective date of the appointment of a permanent commissioner on an address of the assembly, whichever comes first."

And that the address be engrossed and presented to the Lieutenant Governor in Council by the Speaker.

1330

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. MacCharles moves that an humble address—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? That's how I can get through it without making any mistakes. Do we agree? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

### ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Speaker, I believe you'll find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding Bill 27, An Act to require a provincial framework and action plan concerning vector-borne and zoonotic diseases.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Are we agreed? Agreed.

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I move that the order of the House dated November 20, 2014, referring Bill 27 to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly be discharged and that the bill be referred instead to the Standing Committee on Social Policy, and that the Standing Committee on Social Policy shall meet on Monday, June 1 between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. for the public of public hearings, and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 27; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, continue to respect the arrangements that were made by the Standing Committee on the



Legislative Assembly in its May 27, 2015, meeting respecting the following with regard to Bill 27:

First, notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly website and Canada NewsWire; and

That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 noon on Friday, May 29, 2015; and

That, following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; and

That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 4 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015; and further,

That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists; and

That each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and also

That the deadline for written submissions is 6 p.m. on the final day of public hearings; and

That the research office provide a summary of the presentations by 5 p.m. on Friday of the same week following the public hearings.

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** I've got to say the first word.

Ms. MacCharles moves that the order of the House dated November 20—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Agreed? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** Speaker, I believe you will find that we have unanimous consent to put forward a notion without notice regarding Bill 77, An Act to amend the Health Insurance Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 regarding efforts to change or direct sexual orientation or gender identity.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** The minister is seeking unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice. Do we agree? Agreed.

Minister?

**Hon. Tracy MacCharles:** I move that the Standing Committee on Justice Policy shall be authorized to meet on Wednesday, June 3, 2015, between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. for the purpose of public hearings, and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. for the purpose of clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 77; and

That the Clerk of the Committee, in consultation with the committee Chair, be authorized to arrange the following with regard to Bill 77:

First, notice of public hearings on the Ontario parliamentary channel, the Legislative Assembly website and Canada NewsWire; further,

That the deadline for requests to appear be 12 noon on Monday, June 1, 2015; and also,

That, following the deadline, the Clerk of the Committee provide the members of the subcommittee with a list of requests to appear; also,

That the members of the subcommittee prioritize and return the list by 4 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2015; and

That the Clerk of the Committee schedule witnesses from these prioritized lists; and

That each witness will receive up to five minutes for their presentation, followed by nine minutes for questions from committee members; and

That the deadline for written submissions is 3 p.m. on the day of public hearings.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Ms. MacCharles moves that the Standing Committee on Justice Policy—

**Interjection:** Dispense.

**The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac):** Dispense? Agreed. Carried? Carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

## PETITIONS

### PESTICIDES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the government of Ontario is proposing to make regulatory changes to the Pesticides Act that will have a considerable negative impact on virtually all of Ontario’s corn and soybean farmers;

“Whereas comments on the proposed regulations need to be submitted by May 7, 2015; yet the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs plainly states on their website that ‘[t]he optimum planting date [for corn] is on or before May 7 in southwestern Ontario and May 10 in central and eastern Ontario. Delaying planting past the optimum date can result in yield reductions averaging about 1% per day of delay in May.’;

“Whereas the ministry’s website also says: ‘The highest yields of soybeans are obtained from early plantings, generally the first 10 days of May. Later plantings are likely to incur significant reductions in yield ...’;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Instruct the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change to extend the comment period ... beyond the planting season for corn and soybeans as defined by Agricorp planting deadlines to allow farmers to farm, and be properly consulted on these proposed regulations that will significantly impact their livelihoods.”

I agree with this petition, I’ll affix my signature and send it to the table with page Emma.

## HOSPITAL FUNDING

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** Today I have thousands of petitions to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

“Whereas the decision to close the Welland general hospital was made without consultation with the residents

of south Niagara, and without regard for potential social and economic impacts of this closure; and

"Whereas the recommendations to the government contained in Dr. Kevin Smith's report on restructuring of the Niagara Health System included no evidence to support the closure of the Welland general hospital; no needs assessment for the residents of south Niagara; no costing of the entire restructuring plan; and no proposals to mitigate the impact of reduced hospital access; and

"Whereas the catchment area of the Welland general hospital includes four municipalities, with a population of over 90,000, including a high percentage (+25%) of seniors and people living in poverty;

"Therefore, we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"(1) Stop the planned closure of the Welland general hospital;

"(2) Conduct a proper third-party evidence-based study to assess the present and projected health care and hospital services requirements of residents in the catchment area of the Welland general hospital;

"(3) Hold public consultations, not only during the assessment process, but also on recommendations resulting from this study."

I fully support this petition and I affix my signature.

#### LEGAL AID

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** I have a petition addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario entitled "Population-based legal services funding," and it reads as follows:

"Whereas Mississauga Community Legal Services provides free legal services to legal aid clients within a community of nearly 800,000 population; and

"Whereas legal services in communities like Toronto and Hamilton serve, per capita, fewer people living in poverty, are better staffed and better funded; and

"Whereas Mississauga and Brampton have made progress in having Ontario provide funding for human services on a fair and equitable, population-based model;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of the Attorney General revise the current distribution of allocated funds ... and adopt a population-based model, factoring in population growth rates to ensure Ontario funds are allocated in an efficient, fair and effective manner."

I am pleased to sign and to support this petition and to send it down with page Brady.

#### TAXATION

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** A "stop the carbon tax" petition.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the Liberal government has indicated they plan on introducing a new carbon tax in 2015; and

"Whereas Ontario taxpayers have already been burdened with a health tax of \$300 to \$900 per person that doesn't necessarily go into health care, a \$2-billion smart

meter program that failed to conserve energy, and households are paying almost \$700 more annually for unaffordable subsidies under the Green Energy Act; and

"Whereas a carbon tax scheme would increase the cost of everyday goods including gasoline and home heating; and

"Whereas the government continues to run unaffordable deficits without a plan to reduce spending while collecting \$30 billion more annually in tax revenues than 11 years ago; and

"Whereas the aforementioned points lead to the conclusion that the government is seeking justification to raise taxes to pay for their excessive spending, without accomplishing any concrete targets;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of introducing yet another unaffordable and ineffective tax on Ontario families and businesses."

This is signed by hundreds of people in my riding, and I'll hand it to page Ram.

1340

#### LYME DISEASE

**Mr. Michael Mantha:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario does not have a strategy on Lyme disease; and

"Whereas the Public Health Agency of Canada is developing an Action Plan on Lyme Disease; and

"Whereas Toronto Public Health says that transmission of the disease requires the tick to be attached for 24 hours, so early intervention and diagnosis is of primary importance; and

"Whereas a motion was introduced to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario encouraging the government to adopt a strategy on Lyme disease, while taking into account the impact the disease has upon individuals and families in Ontario;

"We, the undersigned, petition the government of Ontario to develop an integrated strategy on Lyme disease consistent with the action plan of the Public Health Agency of Canada, taking into account available treatments, accessibility issues and the efficacy of the currently available diagnostic mechanisms. In so doing, it should consult with representatives of the health care community and patients' groups within one year."

I wholeheartedly agree with this petition and present it to page Jany to bring down to the Clerk.

#### LEGAL AID

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** My petition is for population-based legal services funding.

"Whereas Mississauga Community Legal Services provides free legal services to legal aid clients within a community of nearly 800,000 population; and



"Whereas legal services in communities like Toronto and Hamilton serve, per capita, fewer people living in poverty, are better staffed and better funded; and

"Whereas Mississauga and Brampton have made progress in having Ontario provide funding for human services on a fair and equitable, population-based model;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of the Attorney General revise the current distribution of allocated funds in the 2012-13 budget, and adopt a population-based model, factoring in population growth rates to ensure Ontario funds are allocated in an efficient, fair and effective manner."

Mr. Speaker, I sign my name to this petition, and I'll send it down to the table with page Robert.

#### ONTARIO RETIREMENT PENSION PLAN

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** This is a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Liberal government has brought forward a payroll tax in the form of a mandatory Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP); and

"Whereas the Liberal government has not conducted nor released a cost-benefit analysis of this new payroll tax; and

"Whereas internal Ministry of Finance documents show that the Liberals are aware that the ORPP will increase the cost of doing business in Ontario and kill jobs in the province; and

"Whereas a McKinsey and Co. survey shows that more than four out of every five Canadians already save enough for their retirement; and

"Whereas the Canadian Federation of Independent Business has stated that a majority of its members would have to lay off workers; and

"Whereas the government's plan would force the cancellation of many existing retirement plans that have better employer contribution rates; and

"Whereas low-income earners will have their retirement savings clawed back under this scheme; and

"Whereas Ontarians cannot afford another tax on top of their already skyrocketing hydro bills and ever-increasing cost of living;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To abandon the idea of an Ontario pension tax."

I'm prepared to affix my signature and give it to page Emma.

#### PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** I have a petition to present to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, on behalf of hundreds of people; perhaps you heard their voices over the lunch hour on the front lawn.

"Privatizing Hydro One: Another wrong choice.

"Whereas once you privatize hydro, there's no return; and

"We'll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

"We'll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

"We'll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what's happened elsewhere;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come."

I fully agree with this petition. I will affix my name and give it to my buddy Duncan to take up to the Clerk.

#### CREDIT UNIONS

**Mr. John Fraser:** I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas the Credit Unions of Ontario support 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario's economy and create jobs in three ways:

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

"—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

"—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries."

I agree with this petition, Mr. Speaker, I'm affixing my signature and giving it to page Dale.

#### ALCOHOL SALES

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Ontario is the only one of two remaining provinces in Canada that cannot serve alcohol at licensed establishments prior to 11 a.m.; and

"Whereas LCBO agency stores across Ontario can choose to sell alcohol as early as 7 a.m.; and

"Whereas customers of Ontario golf courses enjoy opportunities to golf earlier in the morning, when they finish their shift work or just start their day; with many charity events and tournaments actually concluding before 11 a.m.; and

"Whereas Ontario golf courses are dealing with frustrated customers because they cannot purchase alcohol at the golf course, if they choose, during their rounds of golf prior to 11 a.m.;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To recognize that eight other jurisdictions in Canada offer alcohol at the golf courses prior to 11 a.m. and that we respectfully request that an equal playing field is established in Ontario so that the golf courses are permitted to serve their customers in a similar fashion."

I agree with this petition, Speaker. I will affix my signature and I'll send it to the desk with Ram.

### PRIX DE L'ESSENCE

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** J'ai reçu des pétitions de Ron Robert, le président—Les enseignantes et enseignants retraités de l'Ontario. Ça me fait plaisir de la présenter.

« Alors que les automobilistes du nord de l'Ontario continuent d'être soumis à des fluctuations marquées dans le prix de l'essence; et

« Alors que la province pourrait éliminer les prix abusifs et opportunistes et offrir des prix justes, stables et prévisibles; et

« Alors que cinq provinces et de nombreux états américains ont déjà une réglementation des prix d'essence; et

« Considérant que les juridictions qui réglementent le prix de l'essence ont : moins de fluctuations des prix, moins d'écarts de prix entre les communautés urbaines et rurales et des prix d'essence annualisés inférieurs. »

Ils demandent à l'Assemblée législative :

« D'accorder à la Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario le mandat de surveiller le prix de l'essence partout en Ontario afin de réduire la volatilité des prix et les différences de prix régionales, tout en encourageant la concurrence. »

Je suis d'accord avec cette pétition. Je vais la signer et je demande à Star Jewell de l'amener à la table des greffiers.

### CREDIT UNIONS

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** "To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario support 1.3 million members across Ontario through loans to small businesses to start up, grow and create jobs, help families to buy homes and assist their communities with charitable investments and volunteering; and

"Whereas Credit Unions of Ontario want a level playing field so they can provide the same service to our members as other financial institutions and promote economic growth without relying on taxpayers' resources;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

1350

"Support the strength and growth of credit unions to support the strength and growth of Ontario's economy and create jobs in three ways:

"—maintain current credit union provincial tax rates;

"—show confidence in Ontario credit unions by increasing credit union-funded deposit insurance limits to a minimum of \$250,000;

"—allow credit unions to diversify by allowing Ontario credit unions to own 100% of subsidiaries."

I am going to sign my name to this petition and give it to page Emma.

### PESTICIDES

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** A petition regarding the Pesticides Act.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas the government of Ontario is proposing to make regulatory changes to the Pesticides Act that will have a considerable negative impact on virtually all of Ontario's corn and soybean farmers;

"Whereas comments on the proposed regulations need to be submitted by May 7, 2015; yet the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs plainly states on their website that '[t]he optimum planting date [for corn] is on or before May 7 in southwestern Ontario and May 10 in central and eastern Ontario. Delaying planting past the optimum date can result in yield reductions averaging about 1% per day of delay in May.';

"Whereas the ministry's website also says: 'The highest yields of soybeans are obtained from early plantings, generally the first 10 days of May. Later plantings are likely to incur significant reductions in yield ... ';

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"Instruct the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change to extend the comment period on EBR posting number 012-3733 beyond the planting season for corn and soybeans as defined by Agricorn planting deadlines to allow farmers to farm, and be properly consulted on these proposed regulations that will significantly impact their livelihoods."

I pass it on to page Jany.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time for petitions has expired.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

### FINANCIAL LITERACY

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, the Ministry of Education should develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum on financial literacy to teach our youth the necessary money management skills.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** It's an honour to speak on motion number 50: teaching our youth financial literacy.



First of all, I want to thank Preet Banerjee, who I consider to be a guru in the field of financial literacy and financial management. If he's watching today, I just wanted to say, Preet, thank you very much for all your insight into this very important topic.

Financial literacy is defined as the ability to use knowledge and skills to manage financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial well-being. Personal financial literacy is more than balancing a chequebook, comparing prices or getting a job. It includes skills like long-term vision, planning for the future, and the discipline to use these skills daily.

Mathematics is an integral part of every curriculum. How to use mathematics for planning a budget or managing money, however, is not often part of the curriculum.

Financial literacy is critical to the prosperity and well-being of all Canadians. It is more than a nice skill to have. It is a necessity in today's world—and, moving forward, should be treated as such by policy-makers, educators, employers and other stakeholders.

The need for this has arisen because young people are now bombarded with information through the Internet. There are no checks and balances or criteria on posting information. People, especially youth, take this information at face value which, in some instances, turns out to be incorrect.

Research has shown that stress affects a large number of Canadians and in most cases it is a direct or an indirect result of financial matters

Australia, Singapore, Britain and the United States have already instituted programs that allow people the opportunity to learn about financial literacy. The curriculum should focus on the following main modules or areas:

Module number 1: Making sense of your money. This module would impart a basic understanding of the financial world as it relates to you. It aims to enable you to set smart financial goals and work out how much you need for your goals. You will also be able to develop a budget by tracking your spending, how to cut down on expenses and how to save on a regular basis by using the spending plan. You will also understand how the effects of compounding interest can impact your savings.

Mr. Speaker, most of us have a credit card, and this credit card usually has an interest rate anywhere from 15% to 20%. But in actuality, when we take into consideration the compounding effect, that turns out close to 50%, something that most people do not know.

Module number 2: Fraud, unfortunately, is on the increase, where almost every Canadian has been approached to buy or participate in programs that provide vast financial benefit. Last year, Canadians lost \$74 million to fraudsters, and in 2013 this figure was approximately \$60 million. Governments at all levels have their hands full investigating fraudulent sources. Our goal should be to educate individuals so they can separate the wheat from the chaff. An additional in educating our youth about fraud prevention is that youth can help inform our seniors, in some simple terms, or maybe in

their own language, about fraud prevention, especially through the Internet.

Module number 3: Credit education. This module aims to enable you to find out if you're borrowing too much, types of loans and associated costs. You will be able to understand the consequences of over-leveraging and the implications of bankruptcy, learn how to avoid borrowing too much, and how to resolve debt issues.

A few decades ago, credit was only used to buy a home or car. Nowadays, credit is on the fingertips of people, and those who are unable to manage it end up with financial and psychological problems. Mr. Speaker, I feel this is probably one of the most important aspects of this motion, or one of the most important things that a person should be concerned about when considering their finances.

I had a story in my constituency office where one of my constituents co-signed a loan on behalf of somebody. This somebody made late payments or didn't make some payments, which ended up costing this constituent dearly in terms of getting financing on a home. After having received financing, he realized he wouldn't be able to get a competitive rate.

This is also more important for newcomers to Ontario, because oftentimes these folks have no idea what a credit score is, mainly because in the place where they come from there's no such thing. So it's really important. Oftentimes, unknowingly, some of our newcomers fall into some very serious situations as to not knowing that their credit score is being affected by some of their activities.

Module number 4: Financial planning, and it begins now. This module aims to help you understand the process of financial planning. You will learn how to assess your financial situation and discover your financial fitness through the use of financial statements and ratios. You will have an overview of the financial plans; namely, saving, insurance and investment, and how they can help you achieve your financial goals.

Mr. Speaker, insurance literacy, I believe, is lacking in most people, with insurance plans from all aspects, from disability insurance to life insurance. They can be very, very complicated to understand. We can always remember the saying, "Always read the fine print," but unfortunately, the fine print doesn't make sense to most people. So it's important to deal with an adviser who can put this fine print into some understandable terms so you know exactly what you're getting.

I had my house broken into and lost some valuables, and I didn't know that I had to get extra insurance to cover some of the items I had lost. The coverage was limited. Again, I did not check into the fine print. It makes it increasingly more of a topic that we should teach our youth.

#### 1400

Module number 5: Money management for youth. Youth need to be educated as early as in high school about the need and impact of loans—student loans, mortgages, credit card debt—timing the buying of a house

and evaluating a job prospect. Again, job prospects may not be such a big thing for people to analyze, but when you get a job, there's a salary involved, there are benefits involved and there's travel relocation. It can all be very tough, and it's very important to have the tools to assess the different types of options that are available to you, because at the end of the day the amount of money you could lose or gain could be substantial.

Module number 6 and other modules: Building a nest egg—very important. We should have the tools available to us to calculate whether an RSP, a TFSA, paying down the mortgage or a combination of those is the right step to take in terms of realizing your goals.

Introduction to personal financing: understanding risks, financial markets, stocks, bonds, debentures, options and warrants.

Insurance: Again, it's very important to learn about the policy you're getting and the potential benefits you will receive or will not receive.

The government of Canada convened a task force to study how to impart financial literacy. The task force recommended a special focus on how to impart financial literacy. Their main recommendations are summarized as follows:

- appointment of a financial literacy leader;
- integrate financial literacy into the formal education system, including high school, post-secondary and formalized adult learning activities;
- financial literacy to be included as an essential link in its Essential Skills framework;
- integrate a financial literacy component into the Canada Student Loans Program for students receiving funding;
- financial literacy training programs for young Canadians eligible for funding through the Youth Employment Strategy;
- provide financial information and education services for recent newcomers to Canada through its orientation services. There's no mention of anything about financial literacy in the packages that newcomers receive once they arrive in Canada.
- work with employers to incorporate financial literacy training into their current workplace training programs and communications. Often employers have different ways of giving their employees benefits, and a person should have an understanding of how to maximize the profit they get from what they're receiving.
- promote financial literacy through programs that reach Canadians directly, with a special focus on young Canadians;
- help Canadians maximize the financial benefit of government funding. For example, as a person with young children, I was fortunate enough that one of the first things I did when my kids were born was to buy an RESP. Even with a small amount of interest and the idea of forced saving, I cannot tell you how useful it has been for me to know that I'm put putting away a little bit every month that will help me greatly when and if my kids do decide to go to a post-secondary education institution.

Today's financial challenges are a testimony to a growing need for specific education, as more and more families and individuals become victims of their financial illiteracy. Such challenges are among the major causes of bankruptcies, foreclosures, divorces, homelessness and even murder-suicide.

While monetary issues seem to be the main source of such hardships, the root cause can be tracked back to lack of character development in individuals. In response to this need, Mind Treasures has developed a unique curriculum, ABCs of Wealth, which combines character development with financial literacy in order to raise an entrepreneurial generation that is mentored to become financially stable and independent, so it can use various forms of wealth, knowledge and expertise to build and establish stronger families, neighbourhoods and a new world.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time you have given me to present my motion on this important topic.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm pleased to rise to speak to this motion today. Few things we debate in the Legislature are as important as discussions about our children's education. Every day, we can look to the pages here in this House and be reminded that we do have a duty to ensure the success of the next generation and those who will lead it. Therefore, we do our best to make sure Ontario's curriculum equips these young people with the skills and knowledge that they will need to succeed when they get older. The success of our children will ultimately drive the success of our province and our country. Aligning our education system in a way that provides students with the skills most in demand in the 21st century helps them succeed in our competitive global market, but also ensures the strength and competitiveness of our economy.

We focus on math, although our scores aren't that great these days, and sciences, and they're not that great either. We can improve those, but they are focused on so that we can hopefully have skilled trades programs in our high schools and post-secondary schools. Well, we can do better at that also. While focusing on those subjects, it's important—it sometimes overshadows the need for a comprehensive financial literacy curriculum.

When a student enters the public education system, there's no telling what they will become. A varied course load allows them to find out what they're passionate about, hopefully, and continue that pursuit as an adult. You can go to a student who might want to be a computer science programmer and another one who wants to work with their hands and maybe become an electrician, or decides that they want to take on the agriculture sector—in the field of agri-business—or become a farmer, we hope.

We can be sure that in any of these professions that these students go into, in their different career paths they all have to manage day-to-day finances. Basic things such as not spending more money in a week than you make or saving money for a rainy day are learned



concepts. As we know from looking at the past Liberal budgets for 12 years, if you don't learn these concepts at an early age, bad habits of spending outside your means can carry over into adulthood.

Statistics Canada has put out a basic financial literacy test. It is actually a survey to determine the level of financial literacy and money management skills of Canadians. Guess what? The results have not been pretty. Canadian adults, on average, score 67% on this test. It should therefore surprise no one that roughly 20% of Canadians face serious difficulties in four out of five dimensions of financial capability.

When I talk about financial capability, I'm talking about the framework that StatsCan used to assess people's ability to manage their finances. The five dimensions of the framework are making ends meet, keeping track of finances, planning ahead, choosing financial products, and staying informed. I emphasize again that these concepts are learned concepts; nobody is born with the above knowledge. It should be clear by now that, for a skill that everyone needs, financial literacy and money management capability among Canadians is inadequate.

I certainly want to commend the member from Brampton West for bringing this issue to the forefront. We all understand the value and importance of financial literacy for every citizen. Therefore, I believe, Ontario should have a comprehensive financial literacy curriculum. I know that Primerica was in this week, and they left pamphlets for parents to help guide their children on how money works.

The most reliable way to help our children is through acquiring knowledge through the school system. So, for that reason, I'm happy to support this motion today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to rise to talk about the motion brought forward by the member from Brampton West on the financial literacy curriculum. This is a topic that I could probably take much longer than 12 minutes on.

I'm going to start my time speaking about a wonderful thing that happened today. I'm about to embarrass my daughter, probably. I got a text message during question period—don't worry, my phone wasn't on. She was very excited to announce that she just got her first job, and she starts next week. During that conversation, I said to Morgan—or, after question period, I called my daughter, Morgan, and congratulated her. I said, "Tomorrow night, when I'm home, we'll go out for a special dinner," and that I had put money on her bank card so she could go buy some clothes for her new job. Then I followed that by, "In two weeks, when you have your first cheque, you can take us out for dinner," and her reply was, "No, Mom. I need to save my money." So she kind of gets it—she doesn't really understand that I might need to save my money too—but she does kind of get it.

1410

I think this is a very important motion. I think the topic is very important. Kids today often don't under-

stand what it means to get a job, how difficult that can be, and then once you get it, how to plan for your future. They have to understand that sometimes expenses pop up that they're not thinking about, so they need to set money aside for that. They need to understand that, although they think they're never going to get old, someday down the road, that will happen. It happens to the best of us. They need to put money aside for that as well. And they need to understand that they need to put money aside for the things that they need, for bills and for being able to go out and buy the clothes they want to wear. There is a lot involved when it comes to financial literacy.

It's a very complex subject that many adults struggle with. In fact, there are many in communities across the province, mine especially, who struggle to make ends meet to begin with, so it's even more important that they know how to stretch every penny, how to make it go as far as it possibly can.

I'm looking at the member's motion and noting that the government has a majority; the minister could have easily brought this forward as a government bill. I acknowledge the effort from the member from Brampton West for bringing this to light now.

There was a report that came out in 2010; the Ministry of Education received it. It was from the Working Group on Financial Literacy. It was entitled *A Sound Investment: Financial Literacy Education in Ontario Schools*. I won't have time to speak to all the points, but there were some very key points that are definitely worth mentioning. They mention the importance of financial literacy education and supporting success for all students. I think I spoke to that when I mentioned that down the road, they have to know how to allot their money for the things they want now, the things they're going to want later, the things they need now and the things they're going to need later. They need to understand how to prioritize. Is it a want or is it a need?

They note the potential for financial literacy education to address social inequities. That's another very important topic, especially in my riding. It's a very diverse riding: I have some very affluent neighbourhoods, we have a lot of middle class, and then we have an area where it's all low-income and people struggling to make ends meet. So I think it's important that students understand that the financial situation for their family may not be the same for every family. They need to understand that there are differences.

A very important one is the need to support teachers in the classroom. We need to make sure that the teachers have what they need in order to provide good programming to the students to help the students be able to make good decisions in the future.

The importance of engaging and consulting with teachers, students, parents, families and other key stakeholders: I can't say enough how important I think that everybody involved—the students in the classroom, the teachers in the classroom, the parents and the families of these students—they all need to be engaged in these conversations. The saying is, "It takes a village." That

couldn't be more true, especially when it comes to financial literacy.

They note the need to optimize technology in support of financial literacy education. Often we find in our education system that there are the haves and the have-nots. There are schools that have laptops, enough laptops for every student. There are schools that have iPads for every student. Then you'll find schools in other areas that don't have a single computer for the kids. They don't have laptop carts; they don't have iPads for their students. There's a real inequity there. We need to make sure that every student in every school in every classroom has the same resources and that the teachers have access to those.

Another point was "Introduce and integrate financial literacy education into the Ontario curriculum as early as possible, in a relevant and age-appropriate way." That's important as well. We need to know what students we are going to reach in the best way and at what age. We need to know what to teach and when. It needs to be supported right through their career in our public education system.

"Continue to embed in the curriculum the core content and competencies required for financial literacy." I would say that goes back to literacy and numeracy. We need to make sure that the students are getting the supports in the classroom on the core subjects in order for them to fully understand what we're talking about when we're trying to teach them financial literacy. If they can't read, and they don't understand basic math, it's going to be very difficult for them to understand when we're talking about financial planning.

"Encourage teachers and educators to foster responsible, engaged, and compassionate citizenship as part of student learning in financial literacy education." I think it's safe to say that every day, our teachers do the very best they can to make sure that students receive the best education they can, that they have individualized learning, and that they reach every student and teach them to be responsible and respectful citizens.

I know that the member from Parkdale–High Park is going to want to speak to this too, so I'm going to wrap it up for now. Like I said, Speaker, I could probably go on all afternoon on this. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Mr. Speaker, I will be sharing my time with the member from Mississauga–Streetsville.

I'm also very supportive of this initiative and this motion. Financial literacy is an essential skill that needs to be ongoing. I remember when I went to school and I got my first credit card, how important it was for me, and if I'd had the financial literacy skills that I needed at that point, I wouldn't have gone out and spent everything on it and thought that I could get anything I wanted and I had to pay later, so it was okay.

It's very, very important that we focus on teaching—

**Ms. Daiene Vernile:** Designer handbags.

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** Yes—the designer handbags and all the other great things that you see when they give

you those applications during frosh week and they have all those people out saying, "Get a credit card now and everything will be great."

We need to focus on telling kids that you do have to pay that money back. Our OSAP loans do have to be paid back. Our credit card bills do have to get paid. If we teach these skills at an early age, kids will better manage their money. I for one worked from the day I was 15, but the credit card still was like this golden opportunity to go spend money that I didn't have. That's why financial literacy is so important: From a young age, you set the stage; you're setting an attitude, a type of life, where people will be more responsible with their money.

A recent opinion research survey found that only one third of Canadian youth ages 10 to 17 years say that their parents regularly talk to them about money and finances.

**Mr. Shafiq Qaadri:** It's the bank of Dad.

**Ms. Harinder Malhi:** That's right.

The research, conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of ABC Life Literacy Canada and sponsored by TD Bank Group, found that money is one of the least-discussed issues between parents and kids.

It's concerning that parents appear reluctant to talk to their children about money and finances. Perhaps it's because they believe their kids aren't interested in money or they're only interested in getting their parents' money, not how they spend it.

This is a subject that is hard to understand. Since learning about essential life skills usually starts at home, parents should be open to having these conversations, and schools should offer to open that conversation up for the parents to make it easier for them to start those conversations and build on that skill of responsibility.

It is a certain responsibility, if you start giving your kids an allowance at a young age and tell them how to manage that allowance and what it will do if they're able to save it. How much further will you go if you start a retirement fund at 19, as opposed to 40?

The first step in improving financial literacy is to take the fear out of finance. Parents need to speak with their children about money management to help teach and guide them, and to help increase every family member's financial literacy levels.

More than 30% of youth surveyed wish their parents would talk to them more about their family's finances.

That's an important point, because a lot of kids will not understand—like the member said previously, you have families with different financial needs and financial restrictions and not everybody can have everything, so it causes quite an unfair balance. If we show our kids how to be responsible with their money, it makes it a more balanced playing field for everybody—because people don't feel privileged, whereas other people may not be as privileged, so the kids will better understand an environment that they're growing up in.

Financial literacy can provide a step-by-step process to complete financial wellness. The first thing that we have to do is to commit to change by talking about finances, by letting children know how important it is to



talk about our finances, what credit ratings are and how credit ratings work and why it's important to have a good credit rating, so that they can build a secure future for themselves, so they can make wise investments and continue to grow those investments. Without a credit rating, they won't be able to do any of that. When kids don't understand what a credit rating is, why they're saving their money, why they have to build their credit rating, it's a recipe for disaster, so it's very important that we start teaching them at a young age.

The other main objective is to be able to assess your financial situation and to know what kind of financial situation you're in so that you can better manage that financial situation—so that children will learn to live within their means and not above their means. You don't want them to be in constant debt and living to pay off that debt.

The third point would be to make your money count; make the most of every dollar. When I was 15 years old, when I started working and I wanted that \$100 pair of jeans, I know my parents always said, "You can have them, but you're going to put up half the money." It always made me not want them quite so much. That's a way of teaching them how much their money means and what the value of money is.

1420

Another good way to manage your money is to document where you spend it. I checked myself how much money I spend at Tim Hortons in a month. I'd be surprised to see what I could save over the course of a year by not going to Tim Hortons at all. Documenting is a great way to teach kids—that way, they see their money coming in and they see their money going out—and to protect yourself by performing regular checks, always checking on your finances, checking on your investments and checking to see where your money is going, whether it's growing or whether it's not growing.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I think this is a great motion. I think it's a great thing to implement for our kids so that we can teach them about the importance of responsibility, the value of a dollar and how to work hard for your money, and to also teach them how important it is for us to respect people in different families from backgrounds that may have financial restrictions.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Lisa M. Thompson:** It's a pleasure to join this debate today because this is something that I'm confident we all feel is important: financial literacy. It's an essential skill, really and truly. In today's economy, it's vital that individuals must have a high level of financial literacy.

I want to share some stats with everyone in the House at this moment. According to Life Literacy Canada, seven out of 10 Canadians are not fully confident that their math and money management skills will help them plan for a secure financial future. Further to that, the Credit Counselling Society conducted a financial literacy

survey just in 2014 and found that 64% of Canadians frequently carry credit card balances, which usually means they're paying higher interest rates than other types of loans, yet these people claim to be financially literate.

Among those surveyed with household income of more than \$100,000, 82% claim to be highly financially literate, but about half of that number said they don't follow a budget or a spending plan. The CCS survey also says that 76% of respondents aged 25 to 34 report that they follow a budget, but that more than two thirds are stressed by having moderate to significant amounts of non-mortgage debt. The conclusions of this study found that many Canadians believe that they are financial stable and aware, yet their bankbook and financial decisions say differently.

I want to share with you that my colleague from York-Simcoe has done a lot of work on this issue over a number of years. I congratulate the member from Brampton West for bringing forward this motion, because it reinforces what the member from York-Simcoe found and shared during her paper. That paper was called Preparing Students for Challenges of the Twenty-First Century. I want to remind everybody of the good work that the member from York-Simcoe has already done.

In her paper, she explained that we should take the solid financial literacy work already done by groups like the Investment Funds Institute of Canada, the Jr. Economic Club of Canada, the Financial Planning Standards Council and Junior Achievement Canada, and introduce it in a structured way into our schools, beginning at the earliest level, so that all of our children will develop financial literacy.

Our member from York-Simcoe went on to explain in that paper that having a solid understanding of money helps build the foundation for the entrepreneurship that Ontario needs to go forward successfully in an economic perspective. Needless to say, this motion falls perfectly in line with this PC view, and that's why I'm happy to say that we are supporting it.

I know that many times in classrooms, students are taught very valuable science, English and math skills. However, we often miss the critical life skills that can help our youth grow as they face financial challenges in their lives, such as doing your taxes, investing your money and obtaining a mortgage. I feel that proper education would prove to be very valuable and students will then be able to apply those learnings to real life situations.

Just last week, actually, when I was in a class for the entire day, a teacher shared with me, "Some courses are getting too soft. We have to get back to the basics." That's essentially what our leader, Patrick Brown, says as well. The member from York-Simcoe actually has much more information to share and I am fortunate to be able to share this time with her today.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cheri DiNovo:** It's an absolute pleasure to rise in the House, as always, and to address this motion, which we're obviously going to support.

A couple of key points: One, I think we can all remember back to our high school days and our elementary school days and remember things that we don't remember, like everything I learned in physics and probably everything I learned in chemistry. But it's amazing that some of those things stick with you, even though we derided them at the time. I have to say that I was talking about home ec classes as I was preparing dinner on Sunday night and remembered some of those items.

We did not have financial literacy classes, and of course we need them; there's no question about it.

I want to say, though, that this is a world fraught with dangers that we, in our generation—most of us here—didn't even begin to approach back then. This is a world where we've got usurious interest rates—I'm just going to say it. Payday lenders are on almost every corner. They're charging over 800% interest. My own daughter got stung by the fast cash of walking in with a paycheque and then getting out and realizing what you pay for it. The absolutely usurious interest rates charged by credit card companies as well—I know that's federal, but it's something we really need to look at as a community. So yes, the responsibility is to train our children, and we should do a much better job. So we support the member's motion.

But we, as a government, also have to look as our responsibility, too, at the world out there and what kind of world our children are growing up into. Years ago, I brought forward a payday lending bill that was synonymous with the law in Quebec, which would limit interest rates to 35%. Think about that: Federally, 35% used to be considered usurious; it was illegal to charge over that. Now it's commonplace to charge over that. It's happening on every street corner in downtown Toronto. Of course, the government did respond, to be fair. We brought those interest rates down. Now they're only about 800%. They were about 1,000%, if we remember. This is outrageous. Nobody, no matter how much money you make, can afford to pay that kind of interest rate. So there's some legislative work to be done here.

Now, the Quebec law means that there are no payday lenders on the streets of Quebec. However, the industry has of course become more sophisticated. It has moved online. So now there's essentially online payday lending at high interest rates. Again, the technology exists to deal with that—other jurisdictions in the States are—so you can prevent rollover loans etc.

Again, not saying anything, yes—absolutely: Beyond balancing our chequebooks, we need to know about interest rates. We need to learn where to look for the pitfalls in life: how to borrow, how to save—all of that. So many people—Canadians now are in more debt than we've ever been in our history. That's a very dangerous situation, and that comes from financial illiteracy. But we also have to protect Canadians from those who, quite frankly, would rip them off and rip off Ontarians.

This is happening every day. I have people in my constituency talking all the time about how they borrowed something from a payday lender, and guess what? Years later they're still paying back that original loan.

This is our responsibility. We cannot let particularly the most vulnerable among us get stung. When I talk about that, I'm also talking about our children. I know that when I went to university, the first thing I didn't see when I walked onto campus was somebody trying to give me a credit card. That's one of the first things our children see when they walk onto campus: somebody to give them a credit card. And no one is telling them that if you don't pay off that amount in full every month, you're always going to be paying that amount off. That's financial literacy too; that's financial literacy 101. And that's government financial literacy as well, because federally we regulate that, and provincially we regulate payday lenders now; it was downloaded to us, so we also have a responsibility.

I would say—and I think I heard somebody in Her Majesty's loyal opposition say something to this effect—that financial literacy begins at home; it begins right here. So yes, we need it in our schools. Absolutely, we're going to pass the member's motion. We also need it in this House, and we need to protect people from those who would exploit them. Sadly, that's still going on.

Again, let's not forget about payday lending. It's still a scourge in our community. Federally—because there is an election coming up—let's not forget about the rates that credit cards charge. That's also our responsibility. Let's pass the member's bill, absolutely, so that kids can be prepared for the extremely dangerous world of finances into which they will walk.

1430

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Mississauga—Streetsville.

**Mr. Bob Delaney:** Thank you very much, Speaker.

How do we know not to run across the street without looking both ways? How do we learn what's right and what's wrong in a civilized society? How do we learn to drive a car safely and to obey the rules of the road? The answer is, we have to be taught.

In the absence of teaching, we couldn't organize a society that contains safe and productive cities. In the absence of being taught, people couldn't learn the skills they need to do the job they do or to work in the career that generates the income that people need to buy what they need to live on and what they choose to buy to express who and what they are.

Who teaches people how to manage their money—large amounts and small amounts—that their job, their profession or their career generates? That's a good question. There are lots of merchants who will use some serious advertising and promotion money to teach you how to spend all the money that you have, all the money that you can borrow and more money on top of that. Who will teach you how to live within your means? Who will teach you that using a credit card is exactly the same thing as spending the money?



You can learn those lessons in bankruptcy proceedings. Trustees in bankruptcy will teach you by hard experience. So will credit counsellors after your spending has gotten out of control. For example, do people really grasp how payday loan advertising pitches about \$20 in fees getting you \$200 really amount to an annual interest rate of around 540%, depending on the terms—540%? Do people really grasp that what you're paying is the same as borrowing \$100 and paying back \$600? It means that if people were truly financially literate, there would be no payday lending industry.

People would insist that their children open a savings account when they start school, as the member's children have. Kids could choose to learn how to save and see their savings grow. If you learn what credit is, how borrowing works, what compound interest is and how interest on debt works, then you're likely to make intelligent choices about how you save money, how you spend money and how you borrow money.

Learning to invest money is a bit more complex if only because, after you've learned the basics, your options then become very much larger, but that's not what the member is proposing. The member is proposing: How do we get Ontarians to learn the basics? The member's bill is not close to teaching anything like what's in the Canadian securities course, for example. It's about enabling Ontarians to control their lifelong money management, to stay out of bankruptcy, to understand how a household budget works, to systematically put away money on a lifelong basis for a secure retirement, and to use credit and borrowing intelligently.

To that end, just a few statistics: In 1980, Canadians spent about 82% of their disposable income. By 2005, Canadians were spending 96% of their disposable income. As spending has increased relative to income, personal savings have fallen from around 20% 30 years ago to a mere 1.2% today.

Markets, financial institutions, merchants, insurance companies and organizations that offer credit spend literally billions of dollars to shape consumer behaviour. The member's proposal very reasonably asks whether the prime motivator in how people save, spend and manage money is going to be how much advertising they're exposed to. In this, I agree with him.

What I like about his resolution is that it is not prescriptive. It doesn't say that schools have to have a set course on this. For example, as we revise our curriculum, why could we not say that in doing your mathematics problems throughout the time that you're in school, some of the questions in the exercises could lead you to discover how to manage your money, could lead you to practise good spending habits? As you're teaching various subjects, is there a way to spin financial literacy into some of those subjects? That's one possible outfall of this.

It does bring to mind, experientially, some of the things that I remember. I can remember being on a sports team back in the 1980s. At one point, we had to get some more equipment for the team. We delegated that to two

of the guys. They called me one Saturday morning and they said, "We need your help." I said, "Why? What's the problem?" It had to do with the fact that they didn't have the cash. I thought, "This is odd. Just put it on a credit card and the team will reimburse you." I was kind of curious, and I drove over to one of the guy's places where they were sitting. It turns out that this one gentleman—born in Canada of Canadian parents, raised and educated in this country—what he would do is he would keep a whole drawerful of his paycheques, and when he needed money he would go and cash a paycheque. When I saw that, I pretty much went ballistic on them. We postponed getting the equipment the team needed and I got him to gather up all of those cheques. We went into the closest bank and we opened a bank account for him. He was in his early twenties at the time. That was the first time he'd ever had a bank account.

I thought to myself, "How pervasive is this?" Well, it turns out that it is very pervasive. It turns out that this is not a problem that's confined to any one geographic area or social strata or whether you're born here or whether you've come here. It's something that's passed down. If you haven't learned good financial habits at home, you're unlikely to practise them as an adult.

I think the member has raised a good discussion point. For that reason alone, this resolution deserves to pass.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Julia Munro:** I'm pleased to not only join in today's debate, but I certainly will be supporting it. The first step, of course, is that we have to have students in the classroom.

What surprised me about our speakers this time is the fact that so many people have referred to the need, as the member himself says, that the ministry should "develop and implement." I went to the website of the Ministry of Education and found a document called Financial Literacy. It was published in 2011. It provides all kinds of demonstrations of the kinds of things that people have wished for in the debate that we have heard. For instance, things like making change obviously have a mathematical component to it, as well as understanding the value of money. I won't go through the ministry guideline but I just want to make sure everybody knows it's there.

The responsibility of the ministry extends beyond the elementary panel. It goes back further even than I as a classroom teacher. It is still available to high school-level students as an economics course.

I'm going to digress very quickly to the demonstration of how things come around again. My class was learning the difference between a monopoly and a free market. At that time the Liberals were engaged in a navel-gazing exercise on the role of Brewers' Retail, as it was known at that point. Of course, it was an absolutely wonderful opportunity to engage my 17- and 18-year-old students to go out and study the Brewers' Retail, which they did with great enthusiasm. The Liberal Party of Ontario at the time had provided a great deal of resources and study and

economics and so on and so forth on the benefits of breaking up that monopoly—or maintaining it. Nothing changes.

What does change is the manner in which the private sector has undertaken on the important role of financial literacy. To suggest that there is a vested interest, I think, is a little disingenuous here. You have groups like the Investor Education Fund providing documents, exercises, activities and online learning and things like that. The Toronto Star has worked for many years with the private sector on things like the Toronto Star Classroom Connection program, which engages kids. Money: It's Up to You free instructional kits: Thousands were distributed to Ontario teachers. So the private sector has recognized—and I'll tell one more anecdote—how important this is.

**1440**

I had a constituent come to me a few years ago. She was the person who wrote up the contracts for the sales of cars. She could not believe the number of 20- or 30-somethings who came, did all the negotiations for the purchase of a car, ready to sit in the back office and sign the paperwork, but didn't have a credit rating, had already been deemed bankrupt—had already declared bankruptcy—with no idea of what that meant in terms of implications for credit and understanding being responsible about money.

It's too bad we only have 10 seconds more, because this is something which I feel has a great deal of importance. We owe it to the next generation.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Brampton West. You have two minutes for your reply.

**Mr. Vic Dhillon:** I'd like to start off first by thanking the members from Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, Windsor West, Brampton—Springdale, Huron—Bruce, Parkdale—High Park, Mississauga—Streetsville and York—Simcoe.

One of the questions we often ask ourselves in life is, "What if I could do it all over again?"—in many respects. I think one of the things we often think about is our finances. "If I could have changed something 20 years ago, what would I have done, and I would have been better off?" I think it's about making choices, and it wouldn't be a hardship if we were taught early in school about the various choices we could make in terms of having a healthy financial situation. I think we would not ask our question on the financial front if we had those tools at an early age.

Also a lot of people think, "Well, I'm not rich; I don't make a ton of money. Why would I want to invest?" This is a thought that a lot of people have, and because of this, they neglect to make a financial plan. Even starting off with a little bit of money—financial management, people who are in this field will tell you that even putting away a little bit at an early age can lead to large dividends later on down the road.

We think about our physical health and our mental health, but I think our society has not given much emphasis to teaching people about their financial health. If we did, I think we would all be better for it.

I thank everyone for their support, and I look forward to passage of this motion this afternoon.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will take the vote on this item at the end of private members' business.

## EMPOWERING HOME CARE PATIENTS ACT, 2015

### LOI DE 2015 DONNANT PLUS DE POUVOIR AUX PERSONNES RECEVANT DES SOINS À DOMICILE

Mrs. Gretzky moved second reading of the following bill:

Bill 92, An Act to amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 with respect to complaints and appeals / Projet de loi 92, Loi modifiant la Loi de 1994 sur les services de soins à domicile et les services communautaires en ce qui concerne les plaintes et les appels.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for her presentation.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It's my pleasure to rise today to debate my private member's bill, the Empowering Home Care Patients Act, 2015. This is my first private member's bill as the MPP for Windsor West, and it's truly my pleasure to speak on their behalf to this very important legislation.

As a rookie member of provincial Parliament last fall, I couldn't believe what was happening when my office was inundated with phone calls from home care recipients and their loved ones in my riding and across southwestern Ontario. The Erie St. Clair Community Care Access Centre had just announced a 33% reduction of daily nursing visits and was reassessing many home care recipients across the province and deeming them to be in the category of low-to-mild needs, resulting in a decrease in their service.

To make up for the service reductions, the CCAC suggested family caregivers take all the responsibility for providing care, in one case even suggesting that a patient's wife change his intravenous medications, which includes actions like flushing out the vein. In another instance, an elderly woman who suffered from a significant abscess was told that wound care was something that her husband should be doing. To her dismay, the service agency tried to force her husband to clean, repack and redress her wound. The agency also referred home care recipients to other community agencies, many of which could not handle an increase in capacity on such short notice—all this in order to make up a deficit of over \$5 million at the agency. Patients were given little or no notice about the reassessment.

In Ontario, you are allowed to appeal a reduction or termination of your home care service, first internally to the service agency and then to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board. It can take up to 60 days for a ruling on the internal appeal, and neither tier guarantees



that your services are sustained throughout the process. Anyone with a loved one who received home care knows that 60 days for a ruling is too long. While some agencies restore services once an appeal is filed, this is not guaranteed, and the appeal system is inconsistent across the province. All too often, recipients in one area of Ontario continue to receive home care services while people with similar needs in other areas of the province lose their care.

In the fall, like the hundreds of home care recipients across Ontario who were also having their home care slashed, my constituents had nowhere to turn.

Speaker, I will forever be thankful for the support of my community, as well as my colleagues from Essex and Windsor–Tecumseh, as we spoke out against these cuts together. Many home care recipients and their family caregivers did not want to become spokespeople for this cause but felt they had no choice. They distributed petitions that were signed by hundreds if not thousands of their friends and neighbours in Windsor and Essex county and across southwestern Ontario.

Every day, support poured in on the phone and in emails. Eventually, after months of uproar across Ontario, 80% of the Erie St. Clair CCAC deficit was wiped clean and the urgency to reduce services was calmed. It was a major victory for my constituents and all those who had ever had their home care reduced or terminated and felt they deserved better.

The issue of sudden reductions or terminations in home care is not limited to the Windsor area. For instance, from September to December 2014, over 1,200 home care patients in the Champlain CCAC catchment area were reassessed, and more than 500 were discharged as a result.

Speaker, my strife is no longer just about these cuts. It's about the way home care recipients are treated across this province and the fight to create a better system for appeals to service reductions. I want to be certain that home care recipients and their families will never be so undervalued in our health care system again. At the very least, they must have access to a robust appeal process that guarantees their service while they are going through a lengthy appeal. Bill 92, the Empowering Home Care Patients Act, 2015, seeks to do just that. If passed, the act will:

- shorten the time period, from 60 days to 30 days, during which an agency is required to respond to complaints respecting decisions about the particular community services a person is entitled to receive;

- require the agency's response to include information about the process for appealing the decision to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board; and

- stay the decision of the agency if it would result in the termination or reduction of the community services provided to a person, if an appeal of the decision is made to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board.

These changes need to be passed today. If anyone in this chamber has a loved one who relies on home care, they will understand that a reduction or termination of

these services is life-altering. It's unfortunate that the appeal process in our home care system does not reflect this.

Home care recipients need to be informed that there are options when their home care service is cut. They need to have time to adjust to their new service level and/or access to a consistent, cohesive outlet to appeal any reductions to their home care.

Our home care system is broken, and structural changes must take place. Bill 92 focuses on just one aspect of a complex system, but we cannot undervalue the importance of empowering home care recipients with access to a robust, consistent appeal process.

If Bill 92 were to become law today, the benefits would be clear to recipients and their family caregivers by tomorrow.

This bill is not limited to the community care access centres, but applies to all approved service agencies under the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994. The bill is a concise, effective way to ensure home care recipients get the home care they deserve that is based on medical fact and patient input.

#### 1450

The bill has received widespread support from across Ontario. The Ontario Health Coalition states: "It is important that home care patients not be cut off of vital home care services while they make appeals. Bill 92 will make the home care appeals system fairer and more just for patients."

The Advocacy Centre for the Elderly indicates that the eligibility criteria for home care services have become fraught with seniors having services cut back. Due to unclear eligibility criteria, seniors must turn to complaint and appeal provisions under the act to enforce their rights. The Advocacy Centre for the Elderly supports Bill 92, on behalf of seniors.

The Ontario Society of Senior Citizens' Organizations wrote a letter of support for this bill and encouraged its members to review this legislation.

Speaker, joining me in the gallery today is a representative from the Alzheimer Society of Ontario. This organization recognizes the value of the bill and states: "Patients and caregivers have enough to worry about when appealing a decision to reduce their home care services. It is important to recognize that the current process of appeal adds undue stress to an already stressful situation by removing services during an appeal. The only option is to hire privately to make up for lost services. And that's really only an option for the few who have enough income to do this."

Also joining me in the gallery are representatives from Care Watch, which also supports this bill on behalf of seniors in Ontario. The organization states that "seniors in Ontario need to have access to a high-quality and comprehensive home and community care system. Having a fair and understandable appeals process that does not interrupt the delivery of care is an important component of that system."

It's clear that stakeholders in home and community care want this bill to pass. They know that Bill 92 is a simple and concise way that we can help home care recipients and their family caregivers right now. I know that my constituents are not alone in being impacted by these service reductions. Home care recipients across southwestern Ontario had their services reassessed just like so many others across the province.

I'm sure that all members of this chamber receive calls from their constituents with similar home care horror stories. I'm asking that all members of this Legislature support home care recipients and their families today. I'm asking that we recognize that our current system is not working. It's failing home care recipients. Families know that our home care system is not meeting patients' needs.

In March, the Donner report was released, and although there is a lot that I don't agree with, it did acknowledge the shortfalls in our home care system and actually called for a timely and transparent appeals process to be included in a home and community care charter.

I'm calling on this government to now recognize the value of a transparent appeal process and vote in favour of the bill that is right in front of them. Speaker, we need the Empowering Home Care Patients Act to pass today—right here, right now. I ask that all members of this chamber join me in supporting this important legislation.

Speaker, I notice that I still have a little bit of time left on the clock, and I just want to mention another story, that wasn't in my notes, of an elderly lady in her mid-90s. She had suffered a very severe stroke. She was unable to walk and unable to talk; she couldn't feed herself, she couldn't bathe herself, and she was incontinent. Through the reassessment process, they decided that she was suddenly, now, low to mild needs and did not require service anymore. I'm not certain how someone who cannot do anything for themselves can be considered low to mild needs.

In fact, her daughter and her son-in-law, who are seniors themselves, were then put into the role of her primary caregivers. So we're talking about seniors who are lifting someone in her 90s, who is frail, out of a wheelchair to put her into bed at night or to bathe her, administer medication to her and feed her. During this process, not only were they in charge of having to care for her on a regular basis; they had no respite. Somebody had to be in the house with the mother 24/7. They couldn't even go out to get groceries, because this woman required both of them to be in the home in order to move her from wheelchair to bed and so on.

When something like this happens, I'm not sure how families are expected to be able to go out and buy the groceries they need, go to work and earn the money they need in order to get private services to take care of someone. It's quite shameful that somebody who is 92 and unable to take care of herself, in one of the most extreme cases, would be considered low to mild needs and arbitrarily cut off from services.

I'm happy to report that after standing in this chamber and asking the minister directly why these cuts are happening—and being able to name people. It wasn't until I stood up and actually started giving names and cases of those impacted that everybody who had come forward and allowed me to share their names, whether it was in the media or in here, had their services restored. But those services could still be cut tomorrow. They're not guaranteed. We need to make sure that these people understand that they do have an appeal process. They can go to the service agency—not just the CCAC; any service agency that provides home care—file an appeal, and be told that there is an additional appeal process—because right now that's not required—and that if they decide to go to the Health Services Appeal and Review Board, those services will be reinstated during that time.

These are critical services that these people need, and they need to know that they have an opportunity to appeal these cuts and these decisions.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde:** I'm proud to rise today to talk about Bill 92, the Empowering Home Care Patients Act.

As some of you know, I'm extremely passionate about this issue. It's also an issue that is quite familiar to me, given my previous role as a social worker working as a discharge planner in the Ottawa Hospital and also as the co-owner of a retirement residence, Portobello Manor, in my riding of Ottawa—Orléans. So it is with great pleasure that I will support the member's bill.

I just want to first highlight the important steps that our government—and I'm very proud of those steps—is taking on the issue of home care. Our government received expert recommendations through Gail Donner, in a report titled *Bringing Care Home*. This report has been instrumental in guiding the creation of our plan, the Patients First road map. The road map, which we will implement over the next three years, has 10 points. These 10 points will make sure we enhance home and community care in order that patients receive the best services possible and have little need to complain.

Through this plan, we will be providing funding for an additional 80,000 hours of nursing care, at-home and community care. That represents a \$750-million investment over the next three years, Mr. Speaker. These hours will be realized through an increased number of visits and hours that health care providers can spend with patients who have complex care needs. From 15 years in the health care sector, this is huge. I'm excited about this plan because I'm pleased to say that this government will be giving greater choice to individuals in choosing their home care provider. This is very, very important.

Our government will also pilot different approaches to give eligible Ontarians more choices over who provides their services in-home and where these services are delivered.

We know that patients—and I have to say that I certainly know too—want to be at home instead of in



hospital. By continuing to increase the quality of care at home, we are addressing the concerns of the member opposite.

I also understand that we need to address the capacity for home care in the future. The Patients First road map will plan for the future. Just as we are building Ontario up and planning for the future of our infrastructure, we are creating a long-term plan for our aging population.

I am pleased that we are moving to create a patient ombudsman who will comprehensively address issues. Anyone in Ontario who has an unresolved complaint about their care at a hospital, long-term-care home or community care access centre will have a transparent health care investigator in the ombudsman. The patient ombudsman will focus on health care issues and enhance the complaints process by adding a patient-centred lens to this process.

Mr. Speaker, it is unquestionably necessary that we seriously consider each and every one's complaints and properly address them. That being said, I support the member opposite's bill and understand her concerns. We, as a government, want to continue to ensure that patients receive the best home care and, if they are not, that the government is responding to their complaints in a speedy manner.

1500

I think the government is showing leadership in how we're going to address those concerns that have been experienced by our patients and our seniors all across the province.

I'm happy, like I said, to support the member, but I'm even more excited to see the next step on our plan.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** I'm happy to rise today to speak to the Empowering Home Care Patients Act, 2015, brought forward by the member from Windsor—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** West.

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** West. Thank you very much, Speaker. I wanted to say her name, but that's not allowed, apparently, so I was trying to be good.

Basically, it's going to affect the Home Care and Community Services Act, so that when complaints are received they're dealt with in a more timely manner—say, in reducing the time an agency has to respond to a complaint from 60 to 30 days—and requires that an agency provide information about the appeals process along with their complaint response.

I think those are all very good ideas. I think that we have to acknowledge that we have a lot of issues in, I'm sure, all of our ridings with home care accessibility and delivery.

The member from Ottawa-Orléans has extensive experience in this field and spoke about the patient ombudsman.

I'm hoping all these things collectively will help access to our home care.

My mom, when I was able to keep her home, went through the process of going through the CCAC to

qualify for home care. It's a complicated system, and it shouldn't be so complicated. I know the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care are trying to make some changes that hopefully will make it better.

It is difficult fielding phone calls from CCACs if something happens in their time schedule—so you can only imagine if an elderly person either is on their own or their spouse is elderly, probably in their 80s. I have lots of stories about how they've been discharged from hospital, and they've given the instructions to the spouse, yet the spouse is, like, 87 years old. They can't be expected to fill in those care gaps. I know that this does happen, especially in the eastern part of Haliburton county. I've had to pick up the phone and ask, "Did you think this through? The person is 87" or high up in age. "How can they actually physically help as much as you think they can help?" So access to the services—and what the services are required needs to be done.

When the CCACs—in my area, anyway—were on strike earlier, the nurses there told me stories that they actually added layers of bureaucracy so that the nurses themselves, who were very highly trained, weren't able to make those decisions. They'd go to a level of bureaucracy that had nowhere near the experiences the nurses had. They'd sometimes wait eight hours before a decision was made to provide the home care. Meanwhile, that patient had been discharged from the hospital and was waiting for home care at home.

It's pretty nerve-wracking if you don't have anybody in your family who has had experience in health care. I can tell you, I still get calls from all my family members on health care—because you're never not a nurse, as I say.

There's too much bureaucracy.

I heard the member mention the great care providers in her area. Some are in the gallery, so I welcome you all.

*Applause.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Yes, we'll give them a hand again. We welcome you.

I have great care providers in my riding, too, who try to fill the gaps. The Alzheimer Society has been mentioned. Community Care City of Kawartha Lakes does a huge amount of work to try to fill in the gaps. We all try, with our families, to fill in the gaps, and sometimes we have to buy extra care.

I have a great story. Haliburton Highlands Health Services got recognized by the LHIN and got awarded some money, a million dollars, which I'm very thankful for. I complain a lot about how the government does spend money. In this situation, I said they spent it wisely.

*Interjections.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** But it's the model that you want across Ontario.

I want to say that I commend the Central East LHIN for working on the Haliburton Highlands Health Services, as it's called. They put forward a plan to co-ordinate their providers, and the hospital is the hub in this situation.

There are about 15,000 people in Haliburton county. We have a great community group called SIRCH. They

involved them. They actually put the community care in—they just took the people and rolled them over into the hospital—and coordinated these services, because, just like the story I shared with you about the east part of Haliburton county, that's what they look after. They knew that they were not able to deliver the home care services out to these regions. It was too hard; it was uncoordinated.

The hospital itself had a smaller program but could only go—I think it was five kilometres outside the village that they actually provided home support services to. It didn't actually have to be health care. It was like home support: Get the meal; help them have the bath. They were doing that.

That's a model that works. It's very efficient. The local people talk to each other, which I like to hear and see, because that's where you get the genuine realization of the needs, the geography and what we can do better.

Part of this announcement was a GAIN clinic, which is Geriatric Assessment Intervention Network. Again, I have experienced that with my mom. There are more of those rolling out. They coordinate with them—it's basically multi-professional care teams that go and see what they need, whether it's adjustment in the drugs, physio, OT—anyway, it's a great service. They've incorporated that.

They actually have assisted-living services for high-risk seniors, where they're eligible for 24/7 scheduled and unscheduled visits for personal support services: homemaking services, security checks and care coordination—a brilliant idea—

*Interjection.*

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** No, it's not quite Home First, but it's similar, yes—establishing the new palliative care community team to provide clinical and non-clinical community-based care for patients at end of life.

They put a physiotherapy office in Minden, where we didn't have one before, where they had to travel out—so I praise them for that.

That's the model that I want to bring up. They actually listened and responded to our community. We're working with the government and got rewarded for doing the plan, which will save lots of dollars on the other end, which is the fact that these people have to access the hospital, and that's not where they want to be.

I commend the member for bringing this bill forward. We certainly support anything that helps to get more care to our seniors at home and to people who are at home, but doing it with the patients in mind, and it has to be done properly. So thank you very much for bringing that bill forward.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Cindy Forster:** First, I want to congratulate the member from Windsor West for bringing forward this important bill, the Empowering Home Care Patients Act.

I've been a nurse for many years—more years than I actually care to tell you about—and health care should not be operating in silos, which is part of the problem.

We need a system of health care that is coordinated, not fragmented; that is totally public, not privatized; where each and every dollar is invested in the patients and the front-line staff that we have here today and across this province. It needs to be a system that looks after the vulnerable, the infirm, seniors and those in need of short-term and long-term health care.

There is no place in our health care system for the existing privatization, let alone more privatization, as set out in the latest announcement from the Ministry of Health, where they're going to invest another \$750 million, and you can pick your own providers—what is that about? That opens the doors for hundreds more private operators in the system, and will put shareholders and their pockets before health care, which will put profit before quality care, before continuity of care and before seamless care.

The acuity levels of patients in this province who are leaving hospitals and needing home care is growing. The population of people who require home care is aging. Seniors are living longer. The problem with that is they have multiple, complex health needs, so three hours a day, one hour a day, 20 hours a month does not cut it, unfortunately.

Patients are being discharged from hospital much sooner. Some of them are being discharged after hip replacement within 24 to 36 hours; with that, they need more care in their homes.

**1510**

We have got the RNAO calling for the disbandment of the CCAC. I don't know what that's about, Speaker, because just two weeks ago the member from London—Fanshawe put forward a proposal to create an umbrella organization for mental health in this province that got all-party support, because mental health is in crisis. Some 500 agencies are operating—some for-profit, some not-for-profit—without any oversight, without anybody to assist in coordinating those services, and now we've got the RNAO calling to disband a similar organization across the province.

In Niagara, we've had a strike going on for eight weeks. CarePartners is a for-profit agency where the CEO, Linda Knight, made almost \$700,000 last year with her wages and perks, while 1,600 patients in the Niagara region are on wait-lists and not getting the care that they actually need. Dedicated professionals—RNs, RPNs—are on the picket line instead of giving patients the care they need, because their CEO is making hundreds of thousands and they're getting \$18 a visit in a for-profit system, like they were working piecemeal at the canning factory.

Just yesterday, I heard from the CCAC, through the Globe and Mail, that the LHIN in my area is actually moving \$4 million or \$5 million from the CCAC to the community partners to do home care. Were MPPs notified about this? No. I had to hear about it from the Globe and Mail. It is unbelievable what is happening out there.

In addition, they told me that the CCAC in Niagara is ending their wait-lists. I heard about that in the Globe and



Mail as well. There was no notification to any of our offices that seniors who may have had care providers for years are suddenly going to have a new care provider. Nobody has notified anybody of that change—not the LHIN, not the CCAC and not the Ministry of Health. It is atrocious that something like this could happen with no notification, and it's very dangerous for our senior population to not be on a wait-list, particularly those people who don't have families.

I've just got about a minute left, because I know the member from Nickel Belt wants to weigh in here, but I want to give you two recent examples in my community. The mother of a good friend of mine was 86 years old. She went into the hospital. Her name was Barbara Dmytrow. She had a heart attack. She came home from the CCAC. She lived on the second floor of the house, but her daughter was still working and the rest of her family lived in Ottawa and all over the place.

She had a CCAC assessment. She was on oxygen. She was told she didn't qualify for one hour of care—that if she could walk herself to the sink and do a sponge bath at 86 with oxygen, wheeling it along, she wasn't getting any CCAC care. Well, her daughter found her a week later on the floor, where she died alone at 10 o'clock in the morning, because she was getting no care in our community.

Just yesterday, I heard from a woman—her name is Christine—who has an 11-year-old disabled son; he's been disabled since about three months old. He had major surgery at SickKids hospital. She took him home on May 11. She could have sent him over to a rehab hospital for a couple of weeks after the surgery, but she took him home, saving the health system thousands and thousands of dollars. It's now May 28. She is still waiting for services and equipment for that child, which he could have had had he stayed in the hospital and cost the system probably \$100,000.

These are the kinds of things that are happening in our community; they need to stop. That is why this bill is so important, so that we have an appeals system in place for people who need care.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

I would ask everyone to join me in welcoming a former member for Ottawa Centre, Mr. Richard Patten, who is in the east members' gallery, a member of the 34th, 36th, 37th and 38th Parliaments. Welcome.

Further debate?

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** I'm pleased to enter into the discussion about this very important subject which, to those of us who have watched the evolution of health care over the years, is exceedingly important.

There was a time when people stayed in the hospital for a lengthy period of time, convalescing very often, and often objected to doing so, particularly older people who did not want to be in a hospital setting. I think the movement we are seeing—across the world, but certainly here in Ontario—to home care is a very positive move, because most people, given the choice and with adequate and good health care available to them in the home

setting, would choose that. Whenever we're striving to improve the circumstances related to those receiving home care, that is good. That's why a discussion this afternoon on this subject is valuable.

I am pleased that our government is investing \$4.3 billion in the community care sector across the province of Ontario. We increased funding by \$270 million this year, and we have provided the LHINs with \$2.4 billion in funding for CCACs, representing close to a 100% increase since 1999. But those are all statistics, and they are important statistics because sometimes you'd get the impression that there's never been an increase in the amount of money going into home care, when in fact there have been huge amounts of money dedicated to home care—at, I must say, the suggestion of those in the health care field, who have said it would be better to have care delivered in the home in many cases, rather than having people convalescing in a hospital setting, though they do have to do that sometimes.

Some of the real heroes we know out there are caregivers from the family. Some of the members have discussed what they go through very often. Often the caregivers are quite elderly or may have health issues themselves. They have been real troopers in terms of providing that kind of support in many extenuating circumstances, but you really do need professional help through personal support workers, nurses and others who can be of assistance to people in this field.

One of the things I've noted when I meet with people is something that's not popular to say. Unfortunately, in the 1990s, the battle over taxes was lost. The right wing said that taxes were bad in the United States, Canada and around the world; therefore, if you mentioned increasing taxes, you'd never be elected. And yet, everyone who comes forward with new programs and suggestions for improvement in health care or other fields knows in their heart of hearts that to deliver the kind of service we would like to deliver, you really have to increase taxes.

So when I meet with people, I ask them that question. I asked them the question at the time: "Are you prepared to increase taxes? Because what you're proposing is very good." Invariably, they'll either say "No," or they'll say, "Yes. Tax somebody else, but don't tax me."

I think as a society, we have to start understanding that if we want improved public services, it'll take more dollars to do so. I wish that message would get out there, but to pretend it wouldn't—I don't think anybody this afternoon has said that, but I encounter many people, because we all meet with people in our constituency offices, and invariably they want government to invest more if they're from the field of public services. I am sympathetic to that, but I ask every time: "Are you prepared to go out and campaign for higher taxes?" "Oh, no. Take it from education. Take it from here. Take it from there. Governments waste money." They have a myriad of excuses for it. I think someday we have to confront that fact, because we have to continue to make improvements.

The member has brought forward some interesting suggestions in her initiative this afternoon to improve. If

we're going to make those improvements, if we see the tsunami coming for health care—for seniors particularly, with the number of people suffering from dementia, and that number is going to increase in the future—it's going to require financial resources to meet those obligations. Unless we as a society—and, I guess, we as politicians—are prepared to put that message out there to people, then we're not honest with them if we don't tell them that that kind of investment is necessary.

I commend the member for bringing forward her initiative this afternoon for consideration of the House. I think it benefits us all when we're able to discuss these in a rather detailed manner, as some members have been able to do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm pleased to rise today to speak on Bill 92, the Empowering Home Care Patients Act, which was put forward by the member from the third party from Windsor West.

1520

I was listening very intently, and I was surprised that nobody jumped up and suggested that maybe we were going a little bit off topic in terms of all this talk about how the only way that we can fund any programs whatsoever is by raising taxes. Mr. Speaker, how much is too much? People are paying income tax, municipality tax, a gas tax, a sales tax. How about if we prioritize? How about if we're careful with the money we do collect? How about if we don't waste money on scandal after scandal—even the OPP investigations—

**Hon. James J. Bradley:** If you want to get into that, you've ruined the whole afternoon.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** Nobody interrupted when you were completely off-topic.

Four OPP investigations and possibly a fifth under way—who is paying for those OPP investigations? The taxpayers of this province of Ontario—taxpayer dollars for OPP investigations when that money could have been going to home care.

The people of the province of Ontario understand very well what's going on. They understand that 1% of their tax is going to provide health care; it's not sufficient. They're willing to pay a significant amount of taxes, but guess what? They're already paying a lot in taxes. We cannot expect people to provide shelter for their families and food for their kids and have a healthy lifestyle and go on camping trips, which I enjoyed with my family when I was younger—they want to see the government prioritize their valuable tax dollars.

I was visited by Loren Freid from the Alzheimer Society of York Region. My riding of Thornhill, of course, is in York region. It was quite heartbreaking to see two gentlemen who came with him. One is a caregiver for his mother, and the other is a caregiver for his wife. Thank goodness that there are programs in York region in our community where patients with Alzheimer's can go during the day, and thank goodness that we do have health care workers who are providing home care.

But I think that we're all told to look carefully at charities before we give them our valuable after-tax dollars, and many people feel that 80% of the money should go directly to services for most charities. If they see it go further askew from 80% and 20%, they say that charity is not getting my money. Some people even say it should be 90% and 10%, or 100% of the money. Well, maybe we have to have that discussion and say that CCACs should be a significant amount of the money—perhaps 80% has to go to front-line health care—and insist on that. If the administrators can't do it, then maybe those administrators have to provide the front-line health care that they're tasked to do.

So we were just hearing today from the member from the third party that the Welland hospital will be closing. How are we here talking about prioritizing tax dollars when we're talking about shutting down health care in a community? Families drive their parents and their children and themselves to appointments. If they have to go farther, that's more time off work and more time away from their family and their tasks. If people have to drive farther for health care, we all know what happens. Oftentimes they don't make it to the hospital in enough time to receive the care that they need in a timely fashion.

We can definitely do better, and in my opinion it's about prioritizing the money that we're already collecting. I don't think that it's fair to constantly go with our hands out to the public when the public is struggling. We could definitely do better.

I appreciate the suggestions in this bill that we have to respond to complaints within 30 days instead of 60 days. In my riding of Vaughan, four complaints, I'm told, were made against a home daycare; this government didn't act upon them, and a little girl unfortunately died under terrible circumstances. It's not enough, unfortunately, to just say, "We'll investigate." We heard the member from Ottawa-Orléans say that it's a priority for her and her government to investigate any complaints. It's not enough to say that we're going to investigate; we have to investigate. It's what we're—

*Interjection.*

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** It's not enough to just have ombudsmen. It's important that we manage the complaints immediately through the Ombudsman, but also the complaints that come to the ministry themselves. They shouldn't have to all go through an ombudsman.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong:** I am pleased to speak in favour of this important legislation, and I applaud my NDP colleague from Windsor West for introducing it.

Although the provincial government has made home and community care the cornerstone of their health care reforms, funding for home care is not keeping pace with the increasing demand for services. Last year, the South West Community Care Access Centre experienced a 33% increase in referrals for services, yet the government funding model doesn't take those increased demands for services into account at all.



Much like my colleague, my offices have received phone calls from constituents who are rightly frustrated by the lack of services and the cuts they are facing. What is most disappointing is that those seniors and their families have to turn to the media to have received responses.

I had constituents contact my office, and we went to the CCAC, and we tried to negotiate with them and reinstate their coverage. Only with the threat of the media is when we got action, which is, again, very disappointing.

Denying home care to seniors leaves seniors with few options but to leave their own homes and to be separated from their family. Further, this approach costs the province much more than it would to keep seniors, like the constituents who call my office, in their own homes with their family or their husband.

As the NDP seniors' critic, I have been so very disappointed by the number of seniors who are being failed by our health care system. From wait-lists for long-term-care beds to denials for home care services, like we are experiencing in southwestern Ontario, I'm convinced we can and must do better by Ontario's seniors. Our seniors deserve to live with dignity, and this bill attempts to achieve just that.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you. The member for Ottawa South.

**Mr. John Fraser:** It's a pleasure to speak to the member from Windsor West's first private member's bill, and I will be supporting it. As a private member's bill, it talks to things that are important to people and important to families. We all share that. We have differences of opinion, sometimes, of how to do that, but we all know that. We all experience it in our communities.

I'm not going to repeat some of the things we've said about Gail Donner's report and our Patients First plan. But I do want to say that one of the pillars in that is making sure that there is an expectation—say, if your mother has a stroke—of what you will get as a level of service, and that would be even across the province. I think that's really important and what the member's bill is speaking to.

I think what's equally as important is that people get access to appeal, as you say, in a timely fashion. I've personally experienced that, through family, and we've all seen it in our communities.

The member from Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock—we should get an abbreviation for that—mentioned that there are many good things happening in her community with the CCAC, and we all know of that.

The reality is that things do fall between the cracks. CCACs deliver care to thousands of people in thousands of places every day. There's a level of complexity to that, and things do happen, and people have to be guaranteed a right to a relatively speedy appeal. I just wanted to assure the member from Thornhill that there will be a patient ombudsman.

I do want to say that, here, it's really a question of choices and priorities. Often people say, "You know

what? You can't raise taxes"—or "You're spending too much money"—"but I've got this hospital in my riding"—or "I've got this facility in my riding"—"that needs help."

It's tough choices. There are tough choices that are out there, so it's not easy. It's a question of balance.

I wanted to also suggest to the member that she may want to check with the Alzheimer Society. They may very well be getting support, as many charitable organizations do, from CCACs. I know that in my riding of Ottawa South, they do.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**M<sup>me</sup> France Gélinas:** I'm happy to add a few minutes to this debate. Let's be clear: Our home care system is broken. It doesn't work. It fails more people than it actually helps.

I will be very clear: I'm old. I remember when we had a robust home care system that was run by not-for-profit agencies. I remember when, in Sudbury, we had the VON, that had career home care workers. Those people knew home care inside and out; that's what they did. We paid them fairly; they had a pension plan; they were paid for travel; and they offered top-quality care.

Then the Mike Harris revolution came in, and they decided that if we were to have competitive bidding and let the private sector in, we were going to do things better, cheaper, faster. When the first round of bidding came in, it was as if they had found a way to clone Mother Teresa. The service was going to be incredible.

**1530**

This is an experiment that failed. Fifteen years later, we are in front of a home care system that doesn't work. To make matters worse, there is no way for people, when the system fails them, to put in a complaint.

Every single day in my constituency office, we start the day the same way. We play the messages from the night before and listen to half an hour of people who are complaining about the home care system: "The worker didn't show." "She woke up in the middle of the night and she's still in her wheelchair. Nobody came to transfer her." "She was supposed to go to the baptism of her grandson, but nobody came to transfer her into her wheelchair, so she missed it all." And the list goes on and on.

I have Mr. and Mrs. Jenkinson, who came to see me last week during constituency week. He was severely sick. Think liver abscess, PICC line, liver drain, got discharged home, "You're going to receive your antibiotics at home." Great. Then they're told, "Oh, no, home care is not going to be in your home. Home care is going to be in one of those clinics. You know, you live in Nickel Belt, an easy 35-minute drive."

He was so, so sick and in so much pain that it was impossible to do, but who do you complain to? When you call your case manager at the CCAC, she tells you, "Oh, no. Yes, you were referred for home care, but the home care you get is to actually come to a clinic." That makes no sense whatsoever.

We have Maurice Lalonde, who lives in a seniors complex in Lively. He and 11 other people receive care each and every single day. Most of them are in wheelchairs and most of them are heavy care. He counts the number of providers he had in a span of five days: nine different people.

How would you like to strip naked in front of nine different strangers to have a bath, Mr. Speaker? This is so degrading. This is such a lack of respect, but where do those people complain? There is nowhere. They come to us and they leave messages on our machine, and we try to do the best we can to help them. I could go on and on.

Darlene Leclerc, for her mum and dad—she has a mess. She's severely disabled, and her dad looks after her mum; both of them are quite elderly. The home care system failed more visits. When they try to complain, they get the runaround.

We need Bill 92—the sooner, the better.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now return to the member for Windsor West. You have two minutes for your response.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** I appreciate the comments from—I believe there were eight members who rose to speak to my bill.

I would like to point out that home care doesn't just affect seniors. That's a large portion of the population that receives health care, but in my riding of Windsor West, we have this wonderful facility called the John McGivney Children's Centre. They have a preschool program that services children with very high, very complex needs—developmental and medical needs. Many of those children receive home care and many families of those children were told that their services were going to be reduced. We're talking about children who will never walk, never talk, cannot feed themselves, are in special wheelchairs that are made just for them. They receive intense therapy. Many of them have trachs that have to be suctioned. They have very complex needs. These families were being told that their children weren't going to receive home care services. They were just arbitrarily cut, and they didn't know where to turn. So they come to my office and ask for help.

We need to understand that it affects people from the youngest to the oldest. They need to have something in place, a mechanism in place to know that they're supported, that they have an opportunity to say, "I don't like what's happening. I don't agree with the fact that you think my loved one doesn't need these services anymore." They need to know that it's going to be dealt with in a timely manner and that there is another mechanism for appealing, and during that time, those services will be restored because they're valuable services.

Just to finish the note: We somehow got off track a bit and started talking about taxes and money and that kind of thing. It's kind of disturbing that the debate became more about dollar signs, the value of a dollar, rather than the value of a human life. I think that it's unfortunate it went in that direction. I just want to put that out there.

I would like to say thank you because it sounds like everybody in the House is in support, so hopefully this will get through quickly.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I will take the vote on that item at the end of private members' public business.

## MULTICULTURALISM

**Mr. Han Dong:** I move that, in the opinion of this House, in order to continue to celebrate our diversity and our commitment to democracy, equality and mutual respect and to appreciate the contributions of the various multicultural groups and communities to Canadian society, Ontario should recognize June 27 of each year as Canadian Multiculturalism Day.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Dong has moved private members' notice of motion number 49. Pursuant to standing order 98, the member has 12 minutes for his presentation.

**Mr. Han Dong:** Thank you to all the respected guests who are joining us in the gallery today: Mr. Ganesan Sugumar, Mr. Robert Fan, Mr. Lenny Lombardi, Ms. Theresa Lombardi, Ms. Norma Carpio, Mr. Phuoc Tran I see there, and Mr. Farooq Khan. Mr. Wei Chenyi will be joining us shortly.

I would like to thank you all for being here today with us and to thank you for your support over the years. I'm extremely honoured to have this opportunity to represent constituents of the great riding of Trinity-Spadina, a riding which, I believe, most members would agree is one of the most culturally diverse ridings in Canada, citing great attractions such as Little Italy, Little Portugal, Chinatown, Kensington Market and Koreatown, just to name a few. I'm humbled to present this important private members' motion to this House and in the presence of my dear friends from diverse communities.

This motion is for Ontario to officially recognize June 27 of each year as Canadian Multiculturalism Day. I'm enormously proud to stand here today to present this motion and pay tribute to those who worked so hard before me.

I would like to begin with a quote from former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau: a man who ushered in a new era of Canadian history; a man who led this country on a new, exciting path; a man who changed the course of this nation forever.

"A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies. National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence. It can form the base of a society which is based on fair play for all.



"The government will support and encourage the various cultures and ethnic groups that give structure and vitality to our society. They will be encouraged to share their cultural expression and values with other Canadians and so contribute to a richer life for us all." Pierre Elliott Trudeau, October 8, 1971.

This passage, to me, illustrates who we are as a nation, as a province and as Canadians. The continued support and encouragement of all cultural and ethnic groups in Ontario is important to build Ontario up. Through this motion, we as a province set an example and demonstrate that we embrace our cultural diversity, that we hold multiculturalism at the very base of our ideology as a province and that we will continue to recognize and respect the countless contributions that our multicultural communities have brought to Ontario.

1540

For example, in this very gallery today is a man who started his successful business enterprise as a newcomer to this province, Mr. Ganesan Sugumar, a long-time and respected friend of mine. He came here from Sri Lanka and started a business. Now it is an enterprise that employs hundreds in Ontario, provides immensely to our economy and is a large contributor to local communities through charity and community events.

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Han Dong:** That's right.

Mr. Sugumar was recently awarded with the distinction of Entrepreneur of the Year on behalf of the Canada-Sri Lanka Business Council. In the same year, he also received Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee Medal from His Excellency the Governor General of Canada for his outstanding and significant contributions to Canada.

Mr. Sugumar's commitment and dedication to volunteerism has helped thousands of Ontarians. He volunteered to raise funds for the Hospital for Sick Children and Stouffville hospital; fundraising for a birthing centre at Centenary hospital; and fundraising for an MRI machine for Scarborough Hospital. Mr. Sugumar, thank you for your hard work. This province is a better place because of it.

Another person I would like to recognize is the late Johnny Lombardi, a pioneer of multicultural media in Ontario. The son of Italian immigrants, Mr. Lombardi was born in Little Italy of Toronto. Mr. Lombardi was a promoter of concerts and sporting events, a champion of multiculturalism before it was ever implemented as a government policy.

He founded the multicultural radio station CHIN in 1966 and CHIN-FM in 1967, which now serves over 30 ethnic communities. By 1968, CHIN was broadcasting in 32 languages, 60 hours per week.

His son Lenny and daughter Theresa remain dedicated to continuing this legacy of their father's. Lenny is the president and CEO of CHIN Radio/TV International, and Theresa is the vice-president and general manager. Mr. Lombardi is an exceptional man who supported his community and helped take multiculturalism to where it is today.

The Premier often reminds us that our competitive advantage is our people. Multiculturalism has attracted the best and brightest minds to our province. This has provided us great economic potential. The recent trade mission led by Minister Chan is a good testimony of that. He is joining us here in this House this afternoon.

The reality is that we as a province welcome roughly 50% of all newcomers to Canada, which is approximately 100,000 a year. These newcomers come to Ontario year after year because we're an exceptional, diverse part of the country. We're culturally tolerant, religiously tolerant and do not discriminate based on who they are and where they're from. The tolerance and naturally accepting nature of Ontarians is a large part of why I'm so proud to be a member of this Legislature and to stand here in this House today presenting this motion.

By officially recognizing Canadian Multiculturalism Day, we are recognizing and celebrating the achievements and the contributions of every ethnic community in this province.

Just this morning, I was at an announcement for the launch of the 2015 Toronto dragon boat race, an event that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors and tourists to the greater Toronto area. This fantastic event celebrates ancient Chinese culture and educates visitors about Chinese heritage and history.

There are many more events that are happening in Trinity-Spadina: Caribana, the Korean Dano Festival, Pride Parade, Chinatown Festival, Taste of Little Italy and the Portugal Day Parade, just to name a few. These are just samples of the amazing community events held every year across Ontario by cultural associations and ethnic communities.

A former member of this House, the honorable Gerry Phillips, has an analogy he uses quite often. I had the pleasure of working with him, and if my memory serves me well, I would like to share that analogy with this House. Gerry sees Canada as a large flower garden. In the beginning, there were only wildflowers; that is, our aboriginal community. As time goes by, we have more flowers in this garden. Now the garden is beautiful and full of colour. Sometimes there will be weeds, such as racism and prejudice, and every one of us has the responsibility of taking those out.

When I first came to Ontario, I noticed that the Chinese community here embraces many cultural traditions that have been long lost in a model urban centre like Shanghai. That speaks to the respect and degree of acceptance that are embedded in our social norms. Multiculturalism is the foundation of that social norm.

I look forward to the support of all members of this House in the passage of this motion.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I'm so pleased to rise today to speak on this motion. In a letter I received from the member for Trinity-Spadina, he mentioned Prime Minister Jean Chrétien designating, by royal proclamation, June 27 of each year as Canadian Multiculturalism Day, and

that if this motion passes, it will show that Ontario remains committed to recognizing the valuable contributions that multicultural groups and communities bring to Ontario's social, cultural and economic fabric.

I just want to talk a little about a few events I have been to in the last week and that I will be going to. As people know, I represent the riding of Thornhill, which is one of the most multicultural ridings in Ontario.

Monday night this week was the Buddhist Association of Canada hosting the 7th Annual Wesak Vegetarian Banquet, and I got to bathe the baby Buddha. It's a really fun ceremony. It was something new for me to experience. I was there with my friend Diane Chen, who is a really fantastic volunteer and advocate for the Cham Shan Temple, which is on Bayview in my riding of Thornhill. I'm looking forward to celebrating next year's Chinese New Year and other events as well. Right now they are fundraising, and this was a fundraiser that I was at. Basically, they're going to build an extension of the Cham Shan Temple in the riding of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brockville—

**Ms. Laurie Scott:** Brock.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:**—Brock. The largest Buddhist retreat temple, it's called the Four Sacred Mountains of Buddhism. It's going to be, sort of, a replica of visiting all four sites. It's a sacred pilgrimage for the world's 350 million Buddhists. I sincerely hope that all 350 million of them don't decide to visit Peterborough at the same time, but we certainly look forward to seeing many of them there. My dad is up north of Peterborough right now, and I'm looking forward to visiting the new temple with him.

Coming up on June 7, in Vaughan, is a celebration of Philippine Independence Day. Erlinda Insigne is president of the Filipino-Canadian Association of Vaughan.

We have, as well, the Shabbat Project of Toronto on June 9. I have a flyer for it here. I'm actually going to be introducing the speaker for the evening, Dennis Prager. It's called *Maintaining Hope in a Dangerous World*. They're focusing on a discussion of Jewish life in troubled times.

What I can say positively about the Jewish community, as a member of the Jewish community, is that we have a way of having serious discussions and still somehow making it entertaining. I think that maybe it's our calling in the world to find some humour in difficult times. Last year, the Shabbat Project of Toronto had one of the largest challah ceremonial bread-bakings. I think there were 2,000 women at the convention centre in Brampton.

Everybody is welcome. You don't have to be Jewish to like Jewish food; we all know that, Mr. Speaker.

Tonight is the Spirit of Hope gala, hosted by the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal. We know that Simon Wiesenthal was world-famous Nazi hunter. This is going to be at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. I'm looking forward to it. Tony Blair, former Prime Minister from the United Kingdom, is going to be the keynote speaker. Again, it will be a serious discussion with entertainment. That's the excitement that we're looking forward to—and of course, lots of good food.

## 1550

This Sunday, unfortunately—the member for Richmond Hill is going to be attending, as well as the member for Oak Ridges and me—it's basically a mosque in the riding of Oak Ridges, and they're having a pro-Khomeini rally, and there's going to be a counter-rally by people who don't want to see radicalism spread to Canada. I think that's all of our concern.

This past May 18, there was the Walk with Israel. I did the entire walk, which circled from Coronation Park to Ontario Place, a big circle of downtown, with the new leader of the PC Party, Patrick Brown, as well as my federal counterpart, Peter Kent, from Thornhill. It was fantastic weather. I think we walked with approximately 10,000 people, and they raised well over a million dollars to support projects in Israel.

On July 18, I'm looking forward to going with another constituent of mine, Laj Prasher, to the Festival of India. It's the 43rd annual festival. It's going to be a huge parade. I'm really looking forward to it. I invite everybody who is listening or here today to meet us at Yonge and Bloor. They're walking all the way to Queens Quay—I hope the weather is going to be co-operative for that—and then taking the ferry across to Centre Island.

Their headline is “Bringing a Splash of Spiritual Culture to Toronto!” I think that's really what this initiative is all about: that the member from Trinity-Spadina wants to bring more than a splash of spiritual culture to Ontario; that he wants to bring a lot of recognition for all the cultural and diverse communities we have in Ontario.

I myself represent the francophone community. Let's not forget that the francophone community is one of the cultural communities in Ontario. Even though it's one of the founding communities, even though Ontario has recognition for bilingual services, a bilingual university, francophone colleges, a francophone separate school system as well as a French Catholic separate school system—in recognition of that, this year we're going to be celebrating the 400th—le 400<sup>e</sup> en français—peut-être je peux le dire un petit peu en français : c'est le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire pour la communauté franco-ontarienne. Je pense que Champlain est venu—le prochain mois de septembre, ce sera le 400<sup>e</sup> anniversaire.

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of Franco-Ontarian culture—really, it is a culture, not just the language of French—there are going to be many events, many exciting opportunities to celebrate. I am looking forward to co-hosting, with the Canadian National Exhibition—the CNE was here yesterday for their reception, and I was happy to speak to the board members about my suggestion, which they seemed to be more than interested in fulfilling, which is to have a Franco-Ontarian day or half-day at the CNE, and invite all the different associations—les assemblées francophones—to come to Toronto, to celebrate at the CNE their culture with maybe some singing, some—I wouldn't say, necessarily, something Québécois in terms of food choices. But I'm sure we could come up with something, maybe sirop d'érable—maple syrup—or something equally fun and equally



delicious. I am going to suggest BeaverTails, even though that's probably not exactly what they have in mind.

**Intersection:** Poutine.

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** You love poutine?

I love BeaverTails with just a bit of sugar on them.

When we think of the cultures in Ontario, we really like to focus on the positive aspects of all the different cultures. It really makes Toronto a wonderful place to visit. One of the reasons we have such a vibrant tourist economy is that we have places like Chinatown, as the member for Trinity-Spadina mentioned, like Kensington Market. Many in the Jewish community—their grandparents were in the same shops as what is now Chinatown. It was sort of a Jewish immigrant place to come, and the Jewish community, like many communities, starts to move towards the suburbs and then starts to move back. That's what we're seeing, certainly, right now, Mr. Speaker.

So what's the negative? We're talking about all the positive multicultural things going on in Ontario. What are the negatives? Well, I'm going to read from this letter that I sent to the honourable Sergeant-at-Arms, about the Al-Quds rally, which unfortunately takes place in many parts of the world. It really ties in with the pro-Khomeini—I guess we can almost call it—terror recruitment that can be going on in our own province, right under our very noses. The letter reads:

"With great urgency I write to call public attention to the repeated demand of a group of public citizens to stage a demonstration of a deeply offensive, racist and deplorable nature on the grounds of Queen's Park.

"The Al-Quds Day tradition was initiated in 1979 by Ayatollah Khomeini to endorse and promote a fundamentalist strain of Islam as well as the hatred and destruction of both the Israeli state and the Jewish people."

Rallies take place, Mr. Speaker, all across North America, with slogans chanted and obscene sentiments suggested, with placards and, yes, even flags of known terrorist organizations which are now outlawed.

We have to focus and we have to bring the stage and the focus to the positive aspects of multiculturalism and ensure that hate is not brought to our wonderful country and our wonderful province and all the wonderful communities.

We all enjoy the diversity, I think, and we enjoy meeting people from other cultures and learning about other cultures; we enjoy, certainly, as I've said, the food from other cultures. It's boring if we're all cut from the same cloth and eating the same food week after week and day after day.

But we also have to recognize that too often people see multiculturalism as an opportunity to propagate hate. So let's focus on the positive. I'm really happy that the member from Trinity-Spadina brought forward this proclamation. On behalf of the PC Party, I'm certainly happy to say that we support and we look forward to celebrating all these wonderful events. I only touched on a tiny bit that takes place over maybe a two-week period.

We look forward to celebrating with all of the members of the House. We enjoy seeing each other outside of the Legislature at these kinds of events; we all know that we do. We look forward to meeting many of our constituents and each other's constituents at the events as well. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** I am pleased to rise on behalf of the constituents that I represent in London West to speak to the motion today that was put forward by the member for Trinity-Spadina. This motion calls on the province of Ontario to officially recognize Canadian Multiculturalism Day every year on June 7. I understand that the purpose of the motion is to demonstrate Ontario's commitment to the official policy of multiculturalism that has been set by the government of Canada. This was adopted, as the member indicated, back in 1971. It's been in place for decades in this country. June 27 has been recognized as Multiculturalism Day since 2003.

I want to say at the outset that New Democrats are certainly proud to stand in support of the motion, and I congratulate the member for Trinity-Spadina for bringing this forward.

This motion, this recognition of June 27 as Canadian Multiculturalism Day, really goes a long way to recognize the vital contributions that people of different ethnic and racial and cultural backgrounds bring to our societies here in Ontario. It celebrates our shared diversity. It acknowledges our collective commitment to democracy, equality and human rights, all those principles that we value dearly as Ontarians.

**1600**

It also sends an important message to newcomers that becoming Canadian does not mean giving up their cultural identity, that in Canada citizenship is not synonymous with culture. So there are opportunities for people to share their cultural identity and to celebrate their cultural identity.

I looked at some of the literature around the concept of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism really has three main goals. The first goal is to recognize and celebrate diversity, which is what we're talking about. We know that both the federal and provincial governments are very active in supporting and encouraging ethnocultural groups to have festivals and community events, to showcase their food, their traditional dress and their cultural traditions.

The second goal is to foster the integration of newcomers into Canadian society. This means ensuring that immigrants are able to find jobs, that they are able to make connections, that they are able to join community groups and that they are able to find their place within society.

The third goal is to create and maintain equality between citizens. This involves enabling newcomers to become full and equal members of our society who have a say, just like the rest of us, and whose views and contributions matter, just like those of us who were born here.

We want to ensure that the skills, the experiences, the insights and the ideas that newcomers bring to Canada are valued, because we know that they enrich our society and benefit us all.

Speaker, we do pretty well on the first goal. Certainly I've found that one of the best parts of being an MPP is being able to participate in those many cultural events and celebrations that take place in my community of London and across the province. I have really enjoyed and been enriched from learning about the different ethnocultural communities I represent in London.

But unfortunately, we don't do nearly as well on the second and third goals, those goals of integration and equality. For example, I've spoken before in this Legislature about the labour market needs of the African Canadian community in London, and the challenges they face integrating into the labour market. There was a needs assessment done earlier this year that found unemployment among African Canadians in London is about 35%, which is five times higher than the overall unemployment rate. Of course, this represents an incredible loss of talent, skills and credentials that these newcomers could bring into our community.

Just this week, there was an article in the London Free Press about a heart surgeon who had arrived in London from Iraq 15 months ago but has been unable to find work that allows him to practise his skills as a physician. This is not just a London issue. This is across the province, and across the country, really.

In Ontario, the Fairness Commissioner issued a report in January of this year that talked about the barriers that internationally educated professionals face in entering the labour market in Ontario. She recommended that some changes be made to the Canadian experience requirements that are put in place by many regulatory bodies, because this requirement for Canadian experience creates a huge barrier for immigrants to be able to enter the workforce. This barrier has also been recognized by the Ontario Human Rights Commissioner. Both bodies have called for these Canadian experience requirements to be removed.

The Fairness Commissioner's report also highlighted the need for better access to bridge training programs for professionals, as well as sustainable funding for these programs, because research shows that they start up, they close down—there's no continuity for immigrants in knowing when they will be offered and where they will be offered. They're also very, very expensive, costing up to \$12,000 for tuition. This creates huge barriers for immigrants to enter these programs, but these programs are necessary for them to enter into the labour market. So bridge training is something that would really help with the integration of newcomers.

Finally, I think we all know that people come to Canada because they want a better life for themselves and their children. They want new opportunities. They want to practise their skills in the occupations they were trained to do. They want to send their kids to post-secondary education so their kids can do better than

themselves, which is what all of us hope for future generations, and can have brighter futures.

If we are not able to do this for the newcomers who come to our society, if we fail to live up to the promise we present, what we risk doing is creating alienation and despair, and we risk losing out on all of those incredible contributions that newcomers can make.

In closing, I would say that we absolutely welcome observing June 27 as multicultural day in Ontario, but we will also continue to push for much, much more.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris:** I'm pleased to rise today and speak in support of private member's motion number 49, brought forward by the member from Trinity–Spadina.

I also want to thank our special guests who are here in the members' gallery this afternoon for coming out and joining us here at Queen's Park. It's a real honour and a privilege to see so many familiar faces, and I want to welcome you all to Queen's Park.

We're fortunate to live in a province as diverse as Ontario. We are the most multicultural province in Canada, where half of all new immigrants to the country make their home. We're a land of opportunity, with a strong, prosperous and democratic society that has been shaped by the hard work of generations of immigrants.

Ontario has over 12 million people. Our population consists of people from 200 countries, speaking as many as 130 languages. Think about it: Close to 200,000 immigrants a year from all across the world continue to choose Canada as the destination for a new home. That's what my parents did decades ago.

Of the more than 1.5 million people who immigrated to Canada and became permanent residents during the last six years, over a third of them immigrated to Ontario. Ontario is the clear, number one destination for immigrants coming to Canada. People are drawn here by an exceptional high quality of life, and by our global reputation as an open, peaceful and caring society that welcomes newcomers and cherishes diversity.

Recognizing June 27 as Canadian Multiculturalism Day in Ontario will give us the opportunity to celebrate our diversity and acknowledge our commitment to democracy, equality, justice and mutual respect. It will give Ontarians a chance to better understand and appreciate the contributions of the various multicultural communities throughout our province and country.

Our multiculturalism is important. It's important because it helps to combat ignorance. It's important because it encourages an open dialogue between different cultures. And it's important because it helps to bridge the gap between different ideas, different values and different beliefs.

Ontario consists of various cultural, racial and ethnic groups. Our multiculturalism helps to foster the idea that every person can make significant contributions to our society because of, rather than in spite of, their differences. We can learn from one another, but first we must



have a level of understanding about each other to facilitate collaboration and co-operation. Celebrating our differences and promoting learning about other cultures helps us all to understand other perspectives within the world in which we live. It makes our province and our country a better place, a more interesting place to live in, because when we have people from diverse cultures contributing language skills, new ways of thinking, new knowledge and different experiences, we are all made stronger.

1610

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to speak in support of this proposed motion officially recognizing June 27 as Canadian Multiculturalism Day. I want to congratulate the member from Trinity-Spadina for moving forward such a thoughtful motion.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Point of order, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. Point of order, the member for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke.

**Mr. John Yakabuski:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I know it's not the norm, but I have to introduce today, in the public gallery, from Cobden public school, students, teachers and parents visiting Toronto and all that it has to offer on a beautiful day. Thank you for joining us at the Legislature.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I welcome our guests, but I remind the member that that's not a point of order.

Further debate?

**Mrs. Cristina Martins:** It gives me great pleasure to stand up in this House this afternoon and speak on this motion. I want to sincerely thank the member—the fabulous, great member—from Trinity-Spadina for putting forward this important initiative.

Multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and of our society here in Ontario. People of all backgrounds have made and continue to make valuable contributions to Ontario. I think it is absolutely appropriate and necessary to dedicate a day to celebrate and recognize the social and economic contributions that immigrants have made and continue to make to our province on a daily basis. It's important that we have a day in which we can celebrate and recognize our diversity. What better day than June 27, as being proposed by the member from Trinity-Spadina?

As an immigrant myself, I understand personally the importance of Ontario's diversity. Speaker, looking around this House here today, I see many members who, like myself, are children of immigrants or immigrants themselves. I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the deep and enduring contributions newcomers have made to the quality of life we enjoy today.

My family arrived in Toronto from Portugal in 1970 and settled in the riding of Davenport. I quickly started kindergarten and began the process of adaptation. Most newcomers will tell you that it's easier for children to adapt. My father attended English-as-a-second-language classes at George Brown College, and thank goodness

they were available—and, 45 years later, we're still providing ESL classes to newcomers in this province. But I'm grateful to my parents for giving me the opportunity to grow up in Canada and to be here today in this House. I'm so proud to represent Davenport, the community that embraced and welcomed my family when we first came to Canada and one of the most diverse ridings in the entire country.

So many fantastic communities call Davenport home and truly make it one of the most vibrant areas in the city of Toronto. Little Portugal comes to mind, and I share that with the member from Trinity-Spadina, as does Corso Italia on St. Clair. As well, the Vietnamese community is very active in Davenport around College Street, and they are represented by the fantastic Vietnamese Association of Toronto, which I've had the pleasure of working with. Of course, there's the Hispanic-Canadian community quite prominent across Davenport, specifically along St. Clair. As many of you know, I had the honour of passing my first bill, Bill 28, An Act to proclaim the month of October as Hispanic Heritage Month.

Thanks to the support from all parties in the Legislature, our province will now recognize the important social, political, economic and multicultural contributions that Hispanic Canadians have made to Ontario. I encourage all members of this House to reach out to the Spanish-speaking communities in each of your ridings for the month of October.

The importance of Hispanic Heritage Month clearly demonstrates the importance of passing this motion and celebrating Canada's multiculturalism. I'd like to thank the member once again for putting forward this motion, and I encourage all members to support this important private member's bill that is being put forward today to celebrate the first Multiculturalism Day in Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Shafiq Qadri:** With your permission and indulgence, Speaker, and with pre-consultation with Hansard, I'd like to offer you a multicultural greeting to not only the citizens and residents of Etobicoke North but broadly to the province of Ontario.

*Remarks in foreign languages.*

Those, Speaker, just for your information—technically, I'm not in fact done, but I will leave it at that. But having said that, I accept the hard-won praise from my colleagues who are sitting next to me.

For your information, those were in the languages of Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil, French or français, Italiano, Portuguese, Spanish, Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, German, Filipino or Telugu and Mandarin, as well as Tibetan.

I offer those greetings from the floor of this Legislature in the spirit not only of my honourable colleague from Trinity-Spadina and the bill that he's proposed, but to celebrate, to recognize, to reaffirm, to promulgate, proselytize—if we have to—the issue of multiculturalism, of pluralism, of celebration—not merely toleration—of diversity.

I would also, Speaker, with your permission, like to commend the Prime Minister of Canada, the Honourable Stephen Harper, for also recognizing the value of multiculturalism, at least when it is time for elections. Having said that, his heart, or at least his electoral sense, is in the right place. I would encourage him and his colleagues and followers to perhaps think of individuals from the diverse cultures that we have in between the election cycles and not merely at the election cycles.

I can tell you, for example—and I stay this with some form, I guess, of regret—that what is being practised at the federal level is akin to what's called “dog whistle politics,” which, of course, have been perfected and made into a fine dark art in the United States of America. There are coded signals given, which perhaps try to foster, inculcate and invigorate the darker side of our natures. For example, we don't have to go too far out of the province of Ontario; we can go to the province of Quebec. Thankfully, the government that was voted out—booted out, I should say—with their, as I believe it was called, Quebec charter of rights or whatever the actual terminology was.

They were at the stage where they specified, in kind of cartoon, diagrammatic form, the types of dress—and therefore implying the types of people who are not welcome in the country of Canada and in the public institutions of Quebec. That's called dog whistle politics. Actually, “dog whistle politics” is a little subtle; that was probably overt. I'm very happy to report that we live in a country where, essentially, that was not only rejected out of hand, but that government was booted out.

We need, whether it's simple humanity, simply realizing that it's the year 2015, or whether it's on the economic arguments that my colleagues have said, or whether it's a historical commemoration of the act of multiculturalism which was brought in by Trudeau I, once upon a time, in 1971, as I understand it—all of these reasons, because we are a pluralist, global society.

I would commend, for example, the pluralist achievements and aspirations of His Highness the Aga Khan, whose centre we, along with the Premier and many of my colleagues, just inaugurated a part of; or, for example, Ratna Omidvar of Ryerson and the Global Diversity Exchange and the extraordinary work she's doing to help bring these types of issues, as I say, as a celebration of humankind, and not merely as an electoral wedge strategy.

Merci beaucoup pour votre attention, monsieur le Président.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** Not to be outdone by my colleague, the member for Etobicoke North, I think it's also very fitting to greet the various communities that make up the wonderful fabric of our Ontario society.

I would like to begin with:

*Remarks in foreign languages.*

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Jagmeet Singh:** And what my colleague from Timiskaming—Cochrane said.

I have to say—I want to make sure it's very clear—that I support the initiative and the private member's bill from the member for Trinity–Spadina. I want to salute you and thank you for bringing it forward.

1620

I think it's absolutely important that we celebrate diversity. It's an important concept, because nature created differences; humans added value to that. It's very important that we say that every unique element that we all exhibit is beautiful and wonderful. All of our diversity makes our society more rich, and it is something that we need to celebrate. In fact, celebrating our uniqueness when it comes to our culture, our language and our spiritual beliefs gives individuals more self-worth and self-confidence. It's something that we need to celebrate; it's very important.

As a society, though, I ask us to start thinking about the way we view multiculturalism. We often think about Canada as a place that is welcoming of other cultures, but instead of thinking of Canada as a place that welcomes other cultures, let's turn that definition somewhat and think of Canada, by definition, as a place that is diverse. It is a place that should be inclusive and accepting of diversity—not that it welcomes other cultures but that it is, in fact, a place that is made up of different cultures. That is its inherent fabric.

In that light, we would move from an initial position where we were talking about the idea of tolerance and tolerating different religions and different cultures and values. “Tolerance” was a term that was used at one point when speaking of different cultures and ethnicities, but we need to move beyond that and into the language of acceptance and inclusivity. That's where we need to move, as a society, and I hope that we will use this as a platform to build on that concept of inclusion.

It's so important that we recognize the importance of inclusion and accepting our diversity and celebrating that diversity, because we all know far too well that racism is alive and well in Canada and, in fact, in Ontario and across the world. To counter some of the negativity that we see that actually seeks to divide us, based on our unique differences and our diversity, we need to send a clear message that we do not accept that approach.

In fact, the fact that we have practices like carding and racial profiling, where people are meant to feel—or made to feel—unwelcome, unwanted, in their own communities and this society—we need to counter that message by putting forward a message of inclusion and acceptance, and I hope that this bill will do exactly that. By celebrating our multiculturalism, we will send a message that as much as we hear and see these signs of divisiveness and these messages that seek to make people feel excluded, unwelcome and not wanted, we actually denounce that and instead want to accept people for their uniqueness.

I want to also acknowledge the fact that all of us in Canada are immigrants. Everyone in Canada, except for those who call this land their traditional land—and I have to acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the



Mississaugas of New Credit. Besides the aboriginals, the First Nations, everyone came to Canada. It's just a matter of when we came.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I would ask everyone in the chamber to join me in welcoming a former member of this Legislature in Ontario's 30th Parliament, Ms. Judy Marsales from Hamilton West.

I now return to the member for Trinity-Spadina. You have two minutes for your response.

**Mr. Han Dong:** I would like to thank the members from Thornhill, London West, Halton, Davenport, Etobicoke North and Bramalea-Gore-Malton for their wonderful comments on this motion, especially the member from London West. I was listening carefully to her comments—her support for the bridge training program and her concerns about internationally trained professionals. These are key issues that must be addressed. I know the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has worked long and hard to protect and enhance these programs because they're cost-effective for the government. We need the federal government to come to the table and give us more funding—not cut it—to support these wonderful programs.

To the member from Etobicoke North: always colourful comments. I couldn't agree more about not just to be friendly or to be supportive to multiculturalism during election times, but to make sure in between that all policy has that embedded. Also, I completely agree with the member from Bramalea-Gore-Malton: The notion of acceptance should be the social norm of this country, as we are all immigrants—we came here from somewhere—except the aboriginal community.

I always believe that to embrace multiculturalism is like paddling upstream: We cannot allow any slack. We have to paddle hard and move forward and make sure that multiculturalism is the new norm of this country.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The time provided for private members' public business has expired.

#### FINANCIAL LITERACY

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** We will deal first with ballot item number 55, standing in the name of Mr. Dhillon.

Mr. Dhillon has moved private members' notice of motion number 50.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### EMPOWERING HOME

##### CARE PATIENTS ACT, 2015

##### LOI DE 2015 DONNANT PLUS

##### DE POUVOIR AUX PERSONNES

##### RECEVANT DES SOINS À DOMICILE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mrs. Gretzky has moved second reading of Bill 92, An Act to

amend the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 with respect to complaints and appeals.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to standing order 98(j), the bill is being referred to—

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Social policy, Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member requests that the bill be referred to the social policy committee. Agreed? Agreed.

#### MULTICULTURALISM

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Dong has moved private members' notice of motion number 49.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

I declare the motion carried.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### VISITORS

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The member for Timmins-James Bay on a point of order.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, you'll see in the Speaker's gallery that we have a visit from Ron Hansen, who was a member here from 1990 to 1995. He's accompanied by his nurse, Jasmin Khan, who is here volunteering in order to assist him as he is here today sharing in the Association of Former Parliamentarians meeting. Let's welcome our friend Ron Hansen and Jasmin.

*Applause.*

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Speaker, he was here so long ago that Todd used to be clerking in his committee when he was a committee Chair.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you, and welcome.

Orders of the day.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

##### PROTECTING THE SCHOOL

##### YEAR ACT, 2015

##### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION

##### DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE

Resuming the debate adjourned on May 26, 2015, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District

School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 27, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

On May 26, 2015, Mr. Flynn moved second reading of Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1629 to 1634.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Would all members please take their seats?

Mr. Flynn has moved second reading of Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Fraser, John	Moridi, Reza
Anderson, Granville	Gravelle, Michael	Munro, Julia
Arnott, Ted	Harris, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Baker, Yvan	Hoggarth, Ann	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Ballard, Chris	Hoskins, Eric	Naqvi, Yasir
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Hunter, Miltzie	Pettapiece, Randy
Bradley, James J.	Jaczek, Helena	Potts, Arthur
Chan, Michael	Kwinter, Monte	Qaadri, Shafiq
Chiarelli, Bob	Lalonde, Marie-France	Rinaldi, Lou
Colle, Mike	Leal, Jeff	Sandals, Liz
Coteau, Michael	MacCharles, Tracy	Scott, Laurie
Crack, Grant	Malhi, Harinder	Sergio, Mario
Damerla, Dipika	Martins, Cristina	Sousa, Charles
Del Duca, Steven	Martow, Gila	Thibeault, Glenn
Delaney, Bob	Matthews, Deborah	Thompson, Lisa M.
Dhillon, Vic	Mauro, Bill	Vernile, Daiene
Dickson, Joe	McGarry, Kathryn	Wilson, Jim
Dong, Han	McMahon, Eleanor	Wong, Soo
Duguid, Brad	McMeekin, Ted	Yakabuski, John
Fedeli, Victor	Meilleur, Madeleine	Yurek, Jeff
Flynn, Kevin Daniel	Milczyn, Peter Z.	Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.	Gélinas, France	Natyshak, Taras
Bisson, Gilles	Gretzky, Lisa	Sattler, Peggy
DiNovo, Cheri	Hatfield, Percy	Singh, Jagmeet
Forster, Cindy	Horwath, Andrea	Tabuns, Peter
French, Jennifer K.	Mantha, Michael	Taylor, Monique
Gates, Wayne	Miller, Paul	Vanthof, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 63; the nays are 18.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion carried.

*Second reading agreed to.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The bill is therefore ordered for third reading.

## PROTECTING THE SCHOOL

### YEAR ACT, 2015

#### LOI DE 2015 SUR LA PROTECTION DE L'ANNÉE SCOLAIRE

Mr. Flynn moved third reading of the following bill:

Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation / Projet de loi 103, Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Pursuant to the order of the House dated May 27, 2015, I am now required to put the question.

Mr. Flynn has moved third reading of Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

All those in favour of the motion will please say "aye."

All those opposed to the motion will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

*The division bells rang from 1639 to 1640.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Mr. Flynn has moved third reading of Bill 103, An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

All those in favour of the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Ayes

Albanese, Laura	Gravelle, Michael	Murray, Glen R.
Anderson, Granville	Harris, Michael	Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Arnott, Ted	Hoggarth, Ann	Naqvi, Yasir
Baker, Yvan	Hoskins, Eric	Pettapiece, Randy
Ballard, Chris	Hunter, Miltzie	Potts, Arthur
Berardinetti, Lorenzo	Jaczek, Helena	Qaadri, Shafiq
Bradley, James J.	Kwinter, Monte	Rinaldi, Lou
Chan, Michael	Lalonde, Marie-France	Sandals, Liz
Chiarelli, Bob	Leal, Jeff	Scott, Laurie
Colle, Mike	MacCharles, Tracy	Sergio, Mario
Coteau, Michael	Malhi, Harinder	Sousa, Charles
Crack, Grant	Martins, Cristina	Thibeault, Glenn
Damerla, Dipika	Martow, Gila	Thompson, Lisa M.
Del Duca, Steven	Matthews, Deborah	Vernile, Daiene
Delaney, Bob	Mauro, Bill	Wilson, Jim
Dhillon, Vic	McGarry, Kathryn	Wong, Soo



Dickson, Joe  
Dong, Han  
Duguid, Brad  
Fedeli, Victor  
Flynn, Kevin Daniel  
Fraser, John

McMahon, Eleanor  
McMeekin, Ted  
Meilleur, Madeleine  
Milczyn, Peter Z.  
Moridi, Reza  
Munro, Julia

Wynne, Kathleen O.  
Yakubski, John  
Yurek, Jeff  
Zimmer, David

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** All those opposed to the motion will please rise one at a time and be recorded by the Clerk.

#### Nays

Armstrong, Teresa J.  
Bisson, Gilles  
DiNovo, Cheri  
Forster, Cindy  
French, Jennifer K.  
Gates, Wayne

Gélinas, France  
Gretzky, Lisa  
Hatfield, Percy  
Horwath, Andrea  
Mantha, Michael  
Miller, Paul

Natyshak, Taras  
Sattler, Peggy  
Singh, Jagmeet  
Tabuns, Peter  
Taylor, Monique  
Vanthof, John

**The Clerk of the Assembly (Ms. Deborah Deller):** The ayes are 64; the nays are 18.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I declare the motion carried. Be it resolved that the bill do now pass and be entitled as in the motion.

*Third reading agreed to.*

### TRANSPORTATION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (MAKING ONTARIO'S ROADS SAFER), 2015 LOI DE 2015 MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LE TRANSPORT (ACCROÎTRE LA SÉCURITÉ ROUTIÈRE EN ONTARIO)

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 20, 2015, on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 31, An Act to amend the Highway 407 East Act, 2012 and the Highway Traffic Act in respect of various matters and to make a consequential amendment to the Provincial Offences Act / Projet de loi 31, Loi modifiant la Loi de 2012 sur l'autoroute 407 Est et le Code de la route en ce qui concerne diverses questions et apportant une modification corrélative à la Loi sur les infractions provinciales.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** The last time this bill was debated, the member for Oshawa had the floor. No?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Oshawa?

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Windsor West. Sorry. My apologies. The member for Windsor West had the floor.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you, Speaker. There's some confusion over here. Speaker, I had the opportunity—

**Mr. Michael Harris:** That's two days in a row.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Well, there's confusion over there every day; I'm just saying.

I had the opportunity to speak to the bill before us on April 20, 2015; unfortunately, I ran out of time before I could finish my remarks. I am pleased to have the opportunity to once again rise in the chamber on behalf

of the people in my riding of Windsor West and finish my remarks from April 20.

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** There are many members carrying on conversations all over, and I can't hear the debate. Would you take the conversations outside?

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I still have two ministers talking in the middle of the room.

To the member for Windsor West.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Thank you again, Speaker. Today I'm here again to speak to Bill 31, the Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act. I had the opportunity to speak to this bill at second reading and my understanding is the bill hasn't changed much since then. Despite several excellent amendments put forward by New Democrats that would have helped strengthen this bill, the bill hasn't changed. Sadly, the Liberals voted against every single amendment put forward by the NDP at committee—every single one.

One of our main concerns is that this bill empowers the government to outsource motor vehicle inspection centres to an unspecified third party that would be exempt from the oversight of the Auditor General and the Ombudsman. A number of my colleagues compared this to the creation of Drive Clean on steroids. It appears to be a fairly accurate depiction. This delegated authority is unaccountable and could have the capacity to dictate to drivers how often they must bring their vehicles in for inspection and what they need to do to pass inspection. I don't think it's unreasonable to ask that this government clarify the vague provisions that allow for this outsourcing.

That is precisely why New Democrats tabled amendments at committee that would improve transparency around this issue. We asked for some accountability mechanisms, be it the Auditor General or the Ombudsman. The Liberals voted this down, although, given the Liberal track record on accountability, I can't say that this was surprising.

We believe that the Director of Vehicle Inspection Standards must be an officer of the ministry, a public servant. For instance, we suggested an amendment that would ensure this. Once again, the Liberals voted this down. Currently, under this legislation, the director could be anyone, including someone chosen by special interests such as insurance companies. In fact, it could even be another Liberal patronage appointment, which so many Ontarians are growing tired of.

An additional amendment that the New Democrats tabled would require motorists to stop at an unsignalled crosswalk if there was a pedestrian waiting to cross. Many in Ontario would be shocked to learn that this isn't already a law. As I understand it, once you step off the sidewalk and onto a crosswalk, motorists have to stop for you and allow you to cross. This is obvious, but not always the practice, unfortunately. What we would like is for this level of protection to be extended to pedestrians waiting at crosswalks.

You will soon see a theme has formed in my speech today, Speaker. The NDP proposed an amendment that would match the law with people's expectations or perceptions of the law. How could you possibly know when it is appropriate to step off the sidewalk and onto a crosswalk if there is nothing prompting you? Are children able to measure traffic effectively and know when it's safe to enter a crosswalk? Wouldn't a requirement that all motorists stop at a crosswalk where a pedestrian is waiting greatly improve public safety?

New Democrats also sought to increase the maximum fine for hitting a pedestrian when they are in a crosswalk. Currently, the fine is \$500, even for—

*Interjections.*

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Stop the clock. If I could ask everybody in the back gallery to take your conversations outside.

Continue.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** New Democrats also sought to increase the maximum fine for hitting a pedestrian when they are in a crosswalk. Currently, the fine is \$500, even in instances where the pedestrian is killed. We proposed that the maximum fine be increased to \$1,000, just as the maximum fine for distracted driving is being increased. The Liberals voted against this.

As I'm speaking on a bill entitled the Making Ontario's Roads Safer Act, I'm reminded that my colleague the member from Essex put forward a motion calling for the widening of Highway 3. He tabled this motion to call on the government to honour a commitment it made in 2006 to widen this highway, running from Windsor to Leamington. Right now, this highway is about two thirds complete. The rest of Highway 3, many people in our area know, is the Bruce Crozier Way. It's a single lane in each direction. If we are talking about safety today, how is this safe? The widening of this highway was something residents of the area have pushed for since 1993, much of the advocacy being done by Bruce Crozier himself. Along with the safety implications, moving forward with this project has many economic benefits. The Leamington-Kingsville area is known for its agriculture, and widening this highway is essential to allow these businesses to grow and access the American market. However, the Liberals failed to support the important motion tabled by my colleague from Essex.

1650

Speaker, I'd like to turn to some of the bicycle safety provisions of this bill. I think it's timely to have a discussion on bicycle safety as so many of us have already started cycling this year. In fact, this month, Windsor residents took part in yet another Tweed Ride. For those of you who are not familiar with this event, it's one part a cycling event and one part a fashion statement, as cyclists ride wearing—you guessed it—their finest tweed fashions. It's something to see. If you've never done something like this before, I invite you to join us next year. This year's event had almost 350 participants, setting a new record. I spoke about the Tweed Ride when this bill was being debated at second reading, and I think

it's very fitting that I had a chance to mention it today, after the event took place.

I talked at length, at second reading, about crosswalks. I think it's very important that we look at the safety of crosswalks. We're encouraging young children to participate in physical activity, and they use crosswalks to get over to the school, to play in the playground, or to one of our parks. They often don't know how to gauge how fast a car is going, how far away it is and how safe it's going to be, how much time they have to make it across the road. I believe that including the amendment that we wanted, which was to make it so that drivers have to stop at a crosswalk, regardless of whether there's a light flashing—if there's someone standing on the sidewalk waiting to cross, the drivers should have to stop and let the person cross. We're putting children at risk, especially young children. They don't have the ability—sometimes, I'll admit, especially in this big city, I have a hard time gauging how much time I still have left to get across the street.

**Mr. Percy Hatfield:** Say it isn't so.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** It is. This is a big city. I come from a little city, your city.

Sometimes it's difficult to gauge the distance across the road and how quickly the light is going to change before you can get across safely. So we need to make sure that children have a mechanism where they know, when they're at a crosswalk, that any car coming is going to stop and wait and let them cross.

I also spoke to the outsourcing. As you know, New Democrats are never in favour of P3s. We're never in favour of removing accountability. We believe that there should be mechanisms in place to make sure that those who are providing services are not only providing the services that we have asked them to provide but that they're doing it in a safe manner; that there are checks and balances in place to make sure that they're doing it in a safe manner; that our safety is not at risk; that they're doing the job well; that they're not just doing the job.

I don't have a lot of time left, so I'm going to go back to talking about the Tweed Ride. As the member from Windsor-Tecumseh can attest to, the majority of it takes place in his riding, and they move into my riding, because our ridings are so closely joined. It's quite the spectacle to see how seriously people take cycling in our city. We have a beautiful waterfront with lots of trails. In the member from Windsor-Tecumseh's riding, they have the Ganatchio Trail, which is a beautiful trail. You can bike, you can rollerblade, you can walk the trail and the waterfront, which extends right from the Windsor-Tecumseh riding right into Windsor West. They're beautiful biking trails, and we need to make sure that people using these trails or cycling on our roadways are safe.

At second reading, I had spoken at length about penalties for cyclists and had spoken about the increase in penalties for cyclists that they were looking at implementing, that they are often harsher than what someone driving a car would be exposed to. We need to make sure that those who choose to ride bikes—I mean, we would rather people on bikes than in cars. So if we're going to



encourage people to ride bikes, we need to make sure that there are safe places for them to ride and that the fines aren't prohibitive, that the rules aren't too prohibitive.

We'd love to have something in Windsor like you have here in Toronto, where there's designated bike lanes with a curb, but we don't have them. We don't have the infrastructure—the roads—to allow that, so we need to make sure that the people who have to ride bikes on the road are safe when they do so, and that every tool is in place to make sure that nobody gets hurt.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It is, as I'm fond of saying, a great honour for me to have the chance to stand in my place here this afternoon in this chamber to speak to Bill 31. Of course, this is the first piece of legislation that I've had the opportunity to introduce as a minister.

*Applause.*

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** Thank you very much to the member from Windsor, who is providing applause at this particular moment, as is the current Minister of the Environment and Climate Change. And as great as the member from Windsor who was clapping a second ago is, I mention the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change specifically because part of Bill 31 was, of course, originally introduced in this Legislature during our last session, before the last provincial election. Especially listening to the other member from the Windsor area who just spoke a moment ago, listening to her talk about the importance, for example, of enhancing safety for those who choose to use additional forms of active transportation, like cycling, it was, in fact, the current Minister of the Environment and Climate Change who showed the leadership and who had that ambitious and energetic sense that it was important to move forward with a previous bill. He deserves applause and he deserves the congrats and the kudos for showing that leadership at that point in time and introducing that previous bill.

Of course, he has been a very strong supporter of seeing us reintroduce Bill 31, which included components of his previous legislation and previous legislation that another former Minister of Transportation, who is currently serving as our Minister of Energy, had introduced around the collection of outstanding Provincial Offences Act fines.

We're winding down the last number of days that we have before we're scheduled to recess for the summer. I would say to all of those who have spoken eloquently from all three caucuses in this Legislature on this bill since it was first introduced that it is extremely important for us to work together to pass this legislation before we recess for the summer, for all of the reasons that you—all of us—have articulated with respect to this legislation since the day it was introduced. So let's work together, let's make it happen and then we can all celebrate.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Mr. Speaker, a couple of things that I want to say in regards to this bill, two things: Side-

by-sides is the first one. There's a section in this bill that deals with side-by-sides. I don't think, unfortunately, it deals with it in the way that we would like. I know that my good friends Mr. Vanthof and Mr. Miller have both introduced bills in order to be able to deal with this issue of side-by-sides. I'm looking forward to—

**Hon. Steven Del Duca:** It's not a legislative change.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** No. Let me finish my speech and you'll understand what I'm saying, Speaker. I'm actually trying to be nice to you, Minister of Transportation, because Ernesaks used to work in my office and she told me I had to be nice to you. So just listen up here a second.

I was just saying that the minister has indicated that he's prepared to do that by regulation; that's why it's not in the bill. I look forward to this particular issue actually being resolved by way of regulation, because this particular issue is big—not only in northern Ontario but in different parts of the province.

The other thing I want to just say very quickly is the whole issue around the Connecting Links program. The government has announced that there is \$15 million in order to assist with Connecting Links. I would say that is really a drop in the bucket to what we need. The two worst roads in Ontario have been voted in the city of Timmins alone and are both the same road. One is Algonquin Boulevard, which is a part of Highway 101 that runs through Timmins itself, and the other part is Riverside Drive, which is the other part of Highway 101, which runs in what we used to call Mountjoy, which is also part of Timmins but the old Mountjoy township. So we now have the two worst roads in Ontario, a four-lane highway that's probably in about as good a situation as a road to Kakatash. And if you've not been on the road to Kakatash, it's a gravel road that is from somewhere else; it's from Plan 9 from Outer Space.

I'm just saying to the minister across the way, we need to do something better when it comes to Connecting Links, because municipalities can't afford to pay the kind of money that they've got to pay when it comes to maintaining what is essentially a provincial highway.

1700

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Kathryn McGarry:** It gives me great pleasure this afternoon yet again to add my voice in support of Bill 31. The safety aspects of this particular bill have been supported on all sides of this House, and I've been delighted to be part of the discussion on numerous occasions and through committee as well.

I need to applaud all those who have spoken in favour of Bill 31, including those who came forward and wrote in submissions for our public consultation part of the bill.

Interestingly, the thing I've heard most about has been distracted driving, looking at the danger that's posing on our roads, looking at strengthening that portion of the bill to ensure that people really do get the message that you need to be fully on when you're in a vehicle. Once this bill is passed, we are going to be looking at three demerit points to really discourage people from distracted driving.

But other parts of the bill: The sanctions that are strengthening our cycling safety are excellent, the one-metre passing rule, making sure that our cyclists are safe on the road. Also looking at pedestrians on our road—we know that one in five traffic fatalities are pedestrians. I really support the sanctions throughout this bill that are dealing with that.

I know the municipalities are looking forward to the passing of this bill to make sure that outstanding fines have to be paid so the municipalities have more money in their system to be able to add to the infrastructure that they need in their communities.

I'm hoping the rest of this afternoon is devoted to ensuring speedy passage of this bill. We have all been looking forward to making sure that the roads in Ontario remain at number one or number two in safety in North America.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Questions and comments?

**Mrs. Gila Martow:** I just want to mention a few things about York region, which is where the riding of Thornhill is. People are very concerned, as the Minister of Transportation is well aware, about not just maintaining infrastructure but doing infrastructure that will make it easier for cars, make it easier for transit users and make it easier for bicycle riders as well as pedestrians.

People are very concerned about the hundreds of millions of dollars—the final price that I know of right now is \$640 million—to build bus lanes in York region. They're not seeing people taking the bus more because of the bus lanes. In fact, people are very frustrated: They see the traffic getting worse, and they feel that the government is too focused on making things more difficult for commuters to get around in York region. People are very concerned that the Spadina subway expansion to York region has been delayed again, and the price tag keeps climbing. They're worried about the valuable tax dollars going to the right projects. They want to have input, and they want to feel that somebody is listening to their concerns.

We're all very well aware that the Pan Am Games are coming this summer. I think that people in the GTA and Hamilton regions are very concerned about the traffic and the transit issues that are going to result during the Pan Am Games. Just this morning around Queen's Park, near the University of Toronto, there was quite a bit of congestion. I'm just thinking to myself, looking over at the University of Toronto, where part of the games will be taking place, and wondering how we're going to manage in terms of transit, traffic and even the cyclists. Are we going to have adequate places for all the bicycles to be locked up? I haven't seen that, but I really hope that's the case.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I now recognize the member for Windsor West. You have two minutes for a reply.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** A topic that I recently read about in the Windsor media—just yesterday, it was reported that we actually had undercover police standing at the side of the road. They have safety vests on, so they just

look like your average person who is waiting for someone to pick them up to carpool to work, or they look like a city worker outside cutting the grass or whatever they might be doing. They were standing at the side of the road and they were targeting people who were on their phones while driving. Well, some may have an issue with it. I think, actually, the Windsor police are—

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** Good idea.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Yes, I thought it was a great idea. Apparently, they actually nabbed quite a few people doing it.

Often people don't realize how serious it is. That one split second when you take your eyes off the road to bring up someone on your contact list to hit "talk" and put it on speaker—they don't realize how dangerous that is, that you've taken your eyes off the road just for those couple of split seconds.

**Mr. Gilles Bisson:** You should try that when you're flying a plane.

**Mrs. Lisa Gretzky:** Oh, that wouldn't be very good if you were flying a plane, unless you have autopilot.

I think this is a really good initiative by the Windsor police, but I think it's unfortunate that it's come to that, that we have to take their valuable resources, the already-stretched resources of our police force, for them to have to stand at the side of the road and try to nab people at red lights or stop signs who were on their phone. I think people need to take that topic more seriously.

Another topic that wasn't directly in this bill but is related to crosswalks is crossing guards. When you have schools and there are crosswalks and busy streets—my children used to have to cross a busy street—people don't often value the crossing guard who's there. The crossing guard is in the middle of the street, trying to cross our children, and people are turning the corner and almost hitting the crossing guard. I think that's another great topic that ties into this road safety.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Further debate?

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** I'm pleased to be standing up and talking to this bill for an hour on a Thursday afternoon. Everybody's pretty excited to listen, and that's good on an important bill. I want to thank you for allowing me to rise in the House and speak on Bill 31, Making Ontario's Roads Safer.

As many of you know, over the last few weeks, I've been speaking time and time again on the importance of keeping our roads safe, so I'm happy to speak for an hour on this bill.

Myself and my fellow members in front of me—

**Ms. Peggy Sattler:** And beside you.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** —and beside me have been working very hard on this bill to make meaningful changes to the safety procedures on our roads here in Ontario.

As many of you can see, this bill is quite large and it contains a number of changes to our road systems here in Ontario. So we need to make sure we discuss this properly and give it the time it deserves.



Over the next hour, I'm going to touch on various things changed by this bill, various amendments proposed to this bill and various comments made to this bill.

As we are now in third reading, this bill has passed through numerous debates in this House and committee. So, today, we're going to have some of those final comments on this piece of legislation before it becomes law.

Throughout the course of my entire speech, I'm going to focus on one thing, and that's road safety. When I say "road safety," I mean more than just a nice title that was given to Bill 31. I'm going to talk about policies and changes that actually make our roads safer, and policies that currently don't exist. I'm going to talk about what's in this bill that actually promotes road safety and what's seriously needed to be considered to make our roads safer. I'm also going to touch on numerous policies in this bill that have very little to do with road safety and a lot to do with trying to ram through laws.

1710

Mr. Speaker, as everyone in this House saw a few weeks ago, the Auditor General proved that the safety Ontarians had come to expect on their highways during the winter months has not been there the past five years. When we hear things like that coming from such respected sources, we need to stop and take a look at what's going on in this province, and not just in the winter months.

We need to work together. I'll repeat that again, because I know everybody on the other side is very interested in this: We need to work together and to legislate where we must to keep people safe. Let me say this one more time, and I'm sure I'll end up saying it again: Safety must be a priority. That's our responsibility as elected members of this Legislature. If there's one thing under our control that is unsafe, we have an obligation to fix it. I hope we can keep the Auditor General's report in mind when we're discussing Bill 31, because it proves that these words have real consequences.

When I look at this bill, as I mentioned when I spoke on it before, there's quite a lot in here that we can get behind and support, and we're happy to help move it forward. When it comes to laws that will actually protect the people of this province when they're driving to work or driving home, New Democrats will be supportive.

It's no surprise that this is a bill that combines a number of laws and amends a number of laws. It's going to get passed in one bill instead of several bills. I think this is important to hear: We're talking about changes to buses, trucks, bicycles, ATVs and the 407, among other things, all in one bill. So naturally, there are some things in here we're quite supportive of. Some things we disagree with, but overall, some language desperately needed changes—language that wasn't changed at all during the committee process.

Let me start with something I believe most people in this House agree on, which is our mission to eliminate distracted driving on our roads. I know a lot of us in here use our BlackBerrys quite often, but cellphone use while driving is something that has come up quite a bit lately

and tends to affect the younger generation. Frankly, 25 years ago, we had no idea this would be a concern. Had you come up to most of us in 1995 and said that people using their phones while driving is going to be one of the biggest safety concerns in the province, we would have looked at you like you had two heads. Today it's a concern, and it's a concern in a big way.

I know that in every round of debates on this bill, we've gone over the stats time and time again. I know you're all familiar with them. We all know that the OPP has said a number of times that distracted driving is the number one—think about this. I know you're all interested in this, but think about this. I think this is key. The OPP has said that distracted driving is the number one killer on our roads, but I think if you asked the people in the province of Ontario what it was, they would probably say drinking and driving, if I'm guessing.

These are the kind of stats that people of this province also need to be familiar with. It's terrifying to hear. It's hard to think that if you just quickly check a message while driving, you're one of the people creating a distracted driving situation, but that sort of casual use is where the danger comes from. When we hear things that state 30% to 50% of accidents on our roads come from distracted driving, we have to take note, especially when you think about who is most likely to be using the cellphone while they're driving: the young people of this province.

For some people, just telling them these stats unfortunately isn't enough. The urge to check a phone call or to check a text when you're on a straightaway is sometimes too great. When we have thousands of young people doing this, we know they're in danger. I can definitely support moving to eliminate this from our roads. In fact, as I understand it, Ontario is one of only three provinces in the country—one of three in the country—which doesn't have demerit points for distracted driving. It's clear that other districts have been more proactive when it comes to eliminating distracted driving. I don't believe Ontario should fall behind.

Mr. Speaker, I've said this before, as well: This needs to work in partnership with an education program. We can't just jack up fines and assume people will stop doing it. There are kids out there driving on back roads or in areas where police just can't patrol. Maybe they're not getting the fines, but they're still texting. If they know how dangerous it is, how much they're putting their own lives at risk, then maybe we can start to truly eliminate this from our roads.

I like these movements to eliminate distracted driving, but I hope this isn't where the buck ends. As quickly as cellphone technology began to be part of everybody's lives, we need to move twice as quick to keep people safe in this province. So let's do this, but keep in mind that the technology is still changing, still evolving, and that we need to keep pace with it.

I always like to bring up the case of seat belts. Mr. Speaker, you remember seat belts, right? I'm sure some of the people would remember. I know Mr. Bradley

would, for sure. When they were first introduced, no one ever wore them, probably including myself. It didn't feel like a responsibility. Now, if you watch any younger person getting into a car, the first thing they do is buckle up, including my three children. It's second nature. Of course, this has come with technology that allows your car to sense if you're not wearing your seat belt, where you get the little light that says, "Buckle up your seat belt." But I believe that is a product of great education campaigns that came with the seat belts. It was simple: "Seatbelts save lives." Three words, and we were able to educate a generation and actually save lives.

1720

The same sort of thing needs to occur when it comes to our cellphones. Right now, people know they shouldn't text while they drive, but they do it anyways. Our goal here should be to create an Ontario where people get into their cars and feel the same obligation to turn off their phone as they do to put on their seat belts. There are some people who say this may never happen, but really, this happened quite quickly with seat belts. It saved lives and, in my opinion, absolutely needs to be part of our campaign to end distracted driving.

Of course, I'm not opposed to these increased penalties. We need to make sure distracted driving is taken seriously. I'm just saying that we can't impose these fines and assume the problem will take care of itself or that we're done with it. As the technology continues to evolve, the laws of this province need to evolve with it to make sure they properly address the threat.

In this House, we've always encouraged each party to work together, to do what they can to make this province one of the safest places to live in the world. This is a government that has said it wants to work with the people of this province. When this bill was in committee, it was still being handled by my friend the member from Algoma-Manitoulin who I know is passionate about road safety, as well as the PC critic for transportation. Yet as they sat through the days of the clause-by-clause, they saw time and time again their amendments continually getting voted down. In fact, if you read the record, you can see that this government voted down amendments of substance that came from the members opposite. And they weren't political amendments, Mr. Speaker; most of the time, they were there to clear up language or to help actually improve road safety.

What's even worse is that this government used its majority to rule a number of amendments out of order. Again, I'd like to commend the PC critic, who even pointed this out during committee. Just because your government may not agree with amendments doesn't mean they're not at least worth talking about.

This legislation will affect people's lives. It will govern how safe our roads are. When it comes to something so important, there shouldn't be anything that is deemed not worthy to even talk about. I hope that in the future, this government takes this advice and lets these amendments at least be debated on the record so that the people of this province can know exactly where their elected representatives stand.

I'd like to just highlight a few of the amendments that were rejected by the government while this bill was in committee. Reading through them, you will see that they are common-sense amendments—common sense.

For example, in this province if a pedestrian is standing next to a crosswalk but hasn't entered the street yet, then the cars don't technically need to stop. So just to clarify: If a pedestrian walks into the road, then the car is legally obligated to stop; yet if a pedestrian is waiting patiently on the side of the crosswalk, then the vehicle technically does not need to stop. How can you not at least take a look at that? If you were to go around the province and ask people if they feel they need to stop for a pedestrian waiting to cross, they would all say yes. Well, unfortunately, that's not actually the case when it comes to the law.

So we offered an amendment to just clear up the law, just to make sure that people were abiding by the law and to make sure that it was clearly written. Well, of course, that amendment was voted down, and I'm still not entirely sure why.

Is there opposition to stopping at a crosswalks? I can't figure it out, but that amendment, like the rest, was voted down. Like I mentioned earlier, it was just common sense and what we were trying to do, quite frankly, was to make the bill stronger. I believe that's our role. I don't think anyone in this would have tried to slow the bill down because it includes a line that protects people waiting to cross the street.

This bill talks about road safety, which is just as important for people using motor vehicles as it is for people on bicycles. We wanted to tighten up the language around the one-metre passing rule for cyclists. Let me say that I'm happy that was included, but we wished that it was stronger so it could be even more effective. When we saw that included, we got together and figured out what the best language—now, think about this—would be to fully protect our cyclists on our roads. We have lots of cyclists right across the province of Ontario, but particularly in Toronto and particularly around Queen's Park. This isn't something that should come as a surprise to anyone.

All across the province, people are turning to bicycles. It's incredible. They're better for the environment, they're healthy and they're more cost-effective. Come down to my riding in the summer; I'm inviting all my fellow Liberals and PCs who are here. You can see people travelling up and down the Niagara Parkway. What happens is that folks use public transit because they can bring their bikes on the GO train, and they come down to the parkway.

You'll like this, Mr. Speaker. I know it's late in the day. It's been an interesting day, but you're going to like this. The parkway is a beautiful drive. On one end you have Fort George in Niagara-on-the-Lake and on the other you have historic Fort Erie in the town of Fort Erie. Both are open to the public and are incredible heritage sites that showcase the history of the region.



Think about this: In between that bike ride, there are dozens of attractions. You can park your bike and explore the gorge. It's absolutely incredible.

How many have been to the Floral Clock before? Anybody here?

*Interjection.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** Yes, Mr. Bradley right here. It's absolutely gorgeous.

You can go to Queenston Heights. How many have been to Queenston Heights? That's what you can do. You can ride your bike. It's incredible.

On your way up the Niagara Parkway on your bike, you can even stop in Chippawa—I'm sure that a few people have been to Chippawa—and have a coffee with my great friend Don Ede. He's really the unofficial mayor of Chippawa, and I promise you that he's great company.

The parkway itself has been perfectly preserved. It's absolutely beautiful, and you can do the entire thing on your bike from one end to the other. It's a great option for recreational biking and a great way to stay healthy. We should be encouraging people like that, people who want to make healthy choices, environmentally conscious choices.

How do we encourage them? Well, we make 100% sure it's as safe as it can possibly be. That's what New Democrats wanted to do. We wanted to make sure that the one-metre rule had strict language. Again, I'm going to talk about language. Right now it just says that vehicles must use a one-metre passing rule—I'll quote what it says, and I know my good friend from St. Catharines will understand this—"as may be practicable." Those are soft words when it comes to contractual language. In bargaining, we call them weasel words. I don't know if I can say that here, but I'm going to say it anyway. They're soft words. What we're saying is, we should be putting in words that are going to make sure we protect the lives of those who choose to ride their bikes. I don't believe that should be an issue of convenience. So we tried to just tighten up the language and make sure cyclists were safe. I don't think anybody in here wouldn't want that. But we couldn't get the amendment done. That amendment was voted down by this government as well. Perhaps one day they will explain to cyclists why they felt that tougher language wasn't necessary.

1730

Mr. Speaker, let me talk about yet another amendment. The Ontario coroner said time and time again that mandatory side guards for trucks would save the lives of cyclists and pedestrians and ensure their safety. These reports were in 2010, 2012 and 2013, calling for side guards. This is an office that can offer some expertise to help strengthen the bill, to really make sure it does everything it can to make Ontario roads safer. The government can say, "Hey, look, we consulted with the office. They added this rule in there because they can prove it increases safety." This isn't something revolutionary here in Ontario. These mandatory truck side

guards are already in place in Europe, where they do a lot of cycling, and in Japan. Along the lines of the reports and the examples set elsewhere in the world, we introduced what I thought was fair and reasonable, that would be easy for all parties to agree to: an amendment for mandatory guards. What happened? Once again, it was defeated by the government. It didn't make a lot of sense.

Mr. Speaker, we also proposed some common sense amendments when it came to motorists who hit pedestrians at crosswalks. Listen to this. This is interesting. I actually met with some people on this. I was absolutely surprised at this one. Right now, when a pedestrian is hit at a crosswalk, the motorist faces a general fine of \$500. That's the fine for failing to yield to a pedestrian at a crosswalk. If you don't stop for somebody, and they get seriously injured or die—this is the part I never knew—that's a \$500 fine. Think about that. I was absolutely shocked. It was actually a group of motorcyclists, in the hundreds, who told me about this. I couldn't believe it. We tried to put language in this bill that would address this issue with a stiffer punishment. I think that's reasonable to expect. Why would anybody not do that? Again, the theme of this is, we were trying to work with the government and say, "Listen, let's make the bill stronger. Let's make sure it's safer for everybody. It doesn't matter if you're a cyclist or you're in a car or a pedestrian. It doesn't matter." Guess what happened on that amendment? Does anybody know? Go ahead.

**Mr. Jeff Yurek:** They voted against it.

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It was voted down.

When you think about it, what would make more sense than an amendment like that? On one hand, this government moves to eliminate distracted driving from our roads, yet they vote against amendments that could change the punishment for the outcome of distracted driving.

The stats prove this. When you're on your phone and driving, you're basically impaired. There's no way you can fully take in what is happening around you. I think we all agree with that.

When you look at how someone might get hit at a crosswalk, and you do the math, you can see that distracted driving may be a big part of it. We want to make sure that the fines for distracted driving are appropriate, but also the fines for the outcome. In my mind, this amendment goes hand in hand with what this government was trying to do. Instead of considering it, the amendment was, of course, voted down. So it seems they're serious about taking on distracted driving but unwilling to follow up.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I'm making a point here. The point that I'd like to make is, these amendments that were proposed weren't designed—by the way, you should listen to this, Minister—to destroy the bill or reverse the hard work that was done by the ministry staff to put it together. We saw some areas where this bill was lacking or perhaps just wasn't strong enough. Instead of showing any interest in working with us, this government voted down every amendment that they themselves didn't pro-

pose. So if people fall victim to some of the missing regulations, that will be on this government. They showed no willingness—and I'm surprised at that, quite frankly—to work with the other members in this House and amend the bill.

Obviously, we support making our roads safer. A number of things in the bill make sense, and we can agree with them. But there's a ton of stuff in here. Some of that content is good, some of that content is not so good, and some of the content is missing entirely.

As I continue to talk about this bill and explain some of the major shortcomings, I hope the members in this House will keep this in mind.

Mr. Speaker, take a look at the issue around roundabouts. Again, I believe the transportation critic has done quite a job proving that there is a lack of clear legislation when it comes to roundabouts in this province. This has left cities and regions putting up their own rules for roundabouts which contradict one another.

When I spoke about this issue before, I mentioned that I have a number of roundabouts in my riding, Niagara Falls, including one of the first in the province of Ontario: in Queenston, right along the parkway I just talked about where you can go to cycle. When it comes to making sure we have clear and uniform rules about roundabouts, it really does affect people in my riding.

The Premier talks about being non-partisan, working with everyone in Ontario. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that making clear regulations about roundabouts in this province is a political issue. I do believe that making sure the people of this province have a clear understanding of what is and is not allowed at a roundabout is a clear safety issue.

Yet this government seems to put politics ahead of safety. In this bill, they had a chance to make sure the roundabouts in this province were safe and properly regulated, yet once again, this bill will pass without any of that. As this House discusses other ways to make sure roundabouts are safe, these laws will quickly come into effect.

1740

Once again, I don't believe this change was going to be anything big or stop this bill. Really, it was quite simple. All it was going to do was make a few tweaks to the Highway Traffic Act and it was solved. Once again, this bill does nothing for that.

I haven't even touched on the regulations that were completely left out of the bill. Just take a look at the associations that were calling for pre-warning yellow lights on school buses. For those of you who don't know, when a bus is slowing down, right now it has to turn on red flashing lights. Cars near buses are not legally required to stop until the bus itself has come to a complete stop. The bus drivers have to use these lights to signal to other drivers that they're about to stop. So what ends up happening here is that the bus turns on those red flashing lights but keeps driving. I think most people would think it would stop, but no, it keeps driving. Cars see these red lights and they stop, only to look at the bus driver in confusion as the bus continues right by them.

It may seem like a small change, but we're the only district, other than Saskatchewan, that does not make regulations which require pre-stop warning lights, which flash yellow, then red lights to go on, to be used when a bus comes to a complete stop. A small change but a safety change, one that's important.

When you really think about this, you can see how important this is. What cargo—I'd like people to listen to this—in this province is more important than what our school buses are carrying? Our kids, our grandkids, our future. They should all be safe on the roadways in this province as they travel to and from school. So if we have confusion over when to stop when a bus is near, you should know who's in most danger. That's right. It's our kids and our grandkids.

It's not like I'm pulling this topic out of thin air. This is an issue that associations have been raising for a long time. I know my colleague has spoken about this in the House. It's a simple fix. No one can keep our children that much safer. Honestly, it's hard to know why it wasn't included in this bill but, in the end, it's not there.

This bill does change some of the language around utility task vehicles or UTVs, as they're called, but not quite as much as we'd like. I know that a number of the members who have constituents in their ridings who frequently use UTVs have been calling for the same rights of passage as ATVs in Ontario. What more input could this government be looking for? UTV and ATV groups have been calling for this, and constituents. The changes are a good admission that there need to be some updates.

The consultation says more needs to be done, and it isn't being done. This wouldn't cost this government a penny. Think about this: not a penny, and yet it would make sure that people who go to change the oil in their UTVs aren't committing a crime. It's a simple fix that could be included in this bill, and I have no idea why it wasn't.

This bill does touch on medical suspensions when it comes to licence renewal—this is an important issue—but I'm not sure if it does exactly what is necessary in this province. I'm happy to see that this has been cleared up a little bit, but let me tell you, this needs to be a lot clearer.

The bill clears up what is and what is not mandatory for a doctor to send to the MTO when it comes to medical review. It also allows the patients to keep their old licence to be used as ID if their licence is suspended. Let me just say that I do applaud the government on that. With all the changes made to ServiceOntario—what does and doesn't qualify for ID these days—seniors in my riding are having a tough time keeping up. We need to make sure that we're not stripping people of ID and leaving them with no reasonable way to prove who they are so they can get health care.

The problem is there's no recognition here with some of the major problems around medical review. I've heard it in my constituency office. A driver has his licence suspended for medical reasons. Okay, that's fair. He has



a heart attack, he's fainting, he has all those types of things that may happen. They go to their doctor and the doctor now says that they're medically cleared to go back to work or to drive. So he's driving a cab, he's driving a transport truck or he has to drive to get to work. For most people, this is good news when their doctor who treats them in their daily lives says that they're healthy and they can expect to go back to work. In this case, they've done their work: They had to prove that they were medically able to drive again. They didn't ask the government to prove it. They went out of their way and they did the work themselves. The problem is that you need to send that to the MTO for the MTO to approve it. The labour minister should listen to this. I know he's here and I appreciate that he's here. So I'm going to read this again and hopefully he can hear it: The problem is that you need to go to the MTO for the MTO to approve it.

So now I'm ready to go back to work, I've been cleared to go back to work, and I've got to get the authorization from the MTO. Of course, this makes a little sense, but it's the time they have to wait that is a major problem, because now I'm cleared to go back to work—if you're on benefits and you're cleared to go back to work, you can no longer collect benefits. If you're in a union shop and you have a union rep, then maybe he can go to the company and talk to them; if you're in a non-union shop, they may end up getting rid of you.

So in Niagara Falls one of my constituent assistants was dealing with these cases over and over again, Minister. The problem was that these people were professional truck drivers, or needed their cars to go to work, and their bosses were doing everything they could—

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** No, this is important to listen to—their bosses were doing everything they could to hold onto their jobs for them, but how long can they hold on for? If they need a product shipped, they need someone to fill the job. It isn't fair for a person to lose their job if they've done everything right. If people have to wait—to the labour minister, because I think they think it's funny over there, but it's not—up to three months from start to finish, that's a severe impact on their ability to hold onto their job and their employment. This province should never get in the way of someone who wants to work, yet that's exactly what is happening. We were doing everything we could, but there is simply no way to speed up the process.

We could end up with people who are medically fit to drive, employers who want to give them shifts, and yet they're still waiting to go back to work. This is a problem that needs to be addressed. These wait times are putting people's employment at risk. So in this bill there were some changes to that process, but they weren't good enough. They need to address the concerns at the ministry level, either through regulations or addressing it in this bill. Until it's addressed, we're going to keep having people being put in stressful situations and losing their jobs.

I'm certainly not trying to pick on the labour minister, but if he'd like to talk to me after this, I'd like to talk to him. We're having lots and lots of issues with this in Niagara with the MTO, and I can relate. I've been off work a few times and have wanted to go back. It's an issue, and I'd appreciate talking to him.

We want to talk about making our roads safer. What would be better than removing cars from the highway? By offering proper public transit, people stop taking their cars places. Look at Niagara. If we had a GO train that we've been calling for, that the community has been calling for, that we're providing a business case for, more people would take the train. They would get out of the gridlock, take public transit and be able to use their phones on the trains all they want. It's a lot safer than driving. It can happen tomorrow. The people have been calling for it. That's one way to make roads safer: Take some of the cars off the roads. It makes a little bit of sense.

1750

I'd like to touch on one aspect of this bill which really highlights the concern we have with all of our amendments being voted down by the Liberal government, and that is the privatization of the vehicle inspection centres. It's another issue. I don't understand why this government believes this would make Ontario roads safer. Look no further than the Auditor General's report which showed that privatizing the winter highway maintenance put people's lives at risk. With that report coming out, we can draw quite a few things between that and this plan.

When the government started to privatize the winter road maintenance, they were telling the people of this province that it would be cheaper, that they'd be able to clear our roads quicker, and it would keep it safe. The Auditor General proved that under their privatized plan, our roads became more dangerous. There was a major problem with oversight and accountability. In the Auditor General's report, we found out that these companies that were given these contracts through RFPs were supposed to report on their own work—now think about this—essentially, telling the government whether they thought they were doing a good job. I wish I could have done that when I worked at General Motors, but I wasn't allowed to do that. You'll never guess what happened, Mr. Speaker.

#### *Interjections.*

**Mr. Wayne Gates:** It turns out they weren't doing a good job. I don't believe it's anything to make fun of, by the way. There was very little oversight. So instead of the problem being fixed right away, the people of this province had to wait five years to get proof of what they had been saying all along: that the privatization failed, that our roads were unsafe and people were at risk.

We as New Democrats take a look at Bill 31 and notice provisions which outsource the vehicle inspection centres. We know what happens when these things get outsourced with absolutely no oversight. There are a number of problems with this plan outlined in the

legislation. In fact, I think one of my colleagues put it well when he basically called it “Drive Clean on steroids.”

For those of you who may not know, the vehicle inspection centres are currently overseen by the province, and should stay that way, by the way. They certify regular passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles. That means the buses and the trucks that fill our highways and our roads all need to be certified by a vehicle inspection centre. We've all seen them along the highway; we've seen the trucks going in.

Consider how many of our constituents either use a passenger vehicle or drive near a truck. This should be extremely important. If you want to ensure our roads are safe for the province of Ontario, then we need to ensure that the certifications are done properly and with accountability. We need to make sure that the procedures and regulations are being followed and that there are stiff fines when centres do not properly inspect the vehicles.

Frankly, this is people's lives we're talking about here. This shouldn't be a debate. When it comes to people's lives, their safety needs to be number one, job one. In order to ensure that safety is number one, this government needs to be able to see how those centres are operating and what's going on inside. You shouldn't be giving them to a third party.

It's so easy for outsourced companies to skip a regulation here and there, or ignore something they don't feel is necessary. When the public doesn't know about it, then even more regulations start getting skipped. It's something we've seen happen time and time again.

Mr. Speaker, I know an hour is a long time to listen to me, and I can appreciate that, but I'm going to continue going.

I'm sure you agree with this and I'm sure that the members opposite agree with this, so what is the concern? We're reading in this bill that the administrator of the new vehicle inspection centre system is not an agent of the crown. What are the implications of that? Essentially, that means that the oversight that government agencies are subject to, like the Ombudsman or the Auditor General, will have no power over these service providers, again.

Let's look at the state of transportation in the province here. Just a few weeks ago, the Auditor General did some digging and was able to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the highways of this province were not as safe as we had been used to and that snow was not being removed from them properly. We know that. The report showed that.

So the Auditor General writes this report and proves that the current system isn't working. Once it brought it to light, we hoped changes will come. Considering how badly monitoring was from these contractors, we would sincerely hope that change is coming.

The Minister of Transportation has said that after 60 days he would like the Auditor General to come back and re-evaluate, so we will be watching closely that process. The problem I have with the 60-day time limit: I don't think there's going to be any snow on our roads. I may be

wrong; we've had some weird weather, but I don't think we're going to have any snow in July and August. I might be wrong. My point is, these are concerns we would never have known about had it not been for the Auditor General's oversight. I think we can all be thankful that that report did shed some light on the issue.

While under Bill 31 the administrator of these outsourced vehicle inspection centres—

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Thank you.

*Third reading debate deemed adjourned.*

## ROYAL ASSENT

### SANCTION ROYALE

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** I beg to inform the House that in the name of Her Majesty the Queen, Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor has been pleased to assent to certain bills in her office.

**The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker):** The following are the titles of the bills to which Her Honour did assent:

An Act to amend the Crop Insurance Act (Ontario), 1996 and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Loi modifiant la Loi de 1996 sur l'assurance-récolte (Ontario) et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

An Act to enhance public health by enacting the Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2014 and the Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2014 and by amending the Smoke-Free Ontario Act / Loi visant à améliorer la santé publique par l'édiction de la Loi de 2014 pour des choix santé dans les menus et de la Loi de 2014 sur les cigarettes électroniques et la modification de la Loi favorisant un Ontario sans fumée.

An Act with respect to immigration to Ontario and a related amendment to the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 / Loi portant sur l'immigration en Ontario et apportant une modification connexe à la Loi de 1991 sur les professions de la santé réglementées.

An Act to create a framework for pooled registered pension plans and to make consequential amendments to other Acts / Loi créant un cadre pour les régimes de pension agréés collectifs et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois.

An Act to amend the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animals for Research Act with respect to the possession and breeding of orcas and administrative requirements for animal care / Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario et la Loi sur les animaux destinés à la recherche en ce qui concerne la possession et l'élevage d'épaulards ainsi que les exigences administratives relatives aux soins dispensés aux animaux.

An Act to resolve labour disputes between the Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board and Peel District School Board, and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation / Loi visant à régler les conflits de travail entre les conseils scolaires de



district Durham District School Board, Rainbow District School Board et Peel District School Board et la Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario.

**The Deputy Speaker (Mr. Bas Balkissoon):** Seeing the time on the clock, this House stands recessed until next Monday at 10:30 a.m.

*The House adjourned at 1759.*

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO**  
**ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO**

Lieutenant Governor / Lieutenante-gouverneure: Hon. / L'hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, OC, OOnt.

Speaker / Président: Hon. / L'hon. Dave Levac

Clerk / Greffière: Deborah Deller

Clerks-at-the-Table / Greffiers parlementaires: Todd Decker, Tonia Grannum, Trevor Day, Anne Stokes

Sergeant-at-Arms / Sergent d'armes: Dennis Clark

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Albanese, Laura (LIB)	York South–Weston / York-Sud–Weston	
Anderson, Granville (LIB)	Durham	
Armstrong, Teresa J. (NDP)	London–Fanshawe	
<b>Arnott, Ted (PC)</b>	Wellington–Halton Hills	First Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Premier vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée
Bailey, Robert (PC)	Samia–Lambton	
Baker, Yvan (LIB)	Etobicoke Centre / Etobicoke-Centre	
<b>Balkissoon, Bas (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Rouge River	Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée Deputy Speaker / Vice-président
Ballard, Chris (LIB)	Newmarket–Aurora	
Barrett, Toby (PC)	Haldimand–Norfolk	
Berardinetti, Lorenzo (LIB)	Scarborough Southwest / Scarborough-Sud-Ouest	
Bisson, Gilles (NDP)	Timmins–James Bay / Timmins–Baie James	
<b>Bradley, Hon. / L'hon. James J. (LIB)</b>	St. Catharines	Chair of Cabinet / Président du Conseil des ministres Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Deputy Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjoint du gouvernement
Campbell, Sarah (NDP)	Kenora–Rainy River	
<b>Chan, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Markham–Unionville	Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade / Ministre des Affaires civiques, de l'Immigration et du Commerce international
<b>Chiarelli, Hon. / L'hon. Bob (LIB)</b>	Ottawa West–Nepean / Ottawa-Ouest–Nepean	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Clark, Steve (PC)	Leeds–Grenville	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Colle, Mike (LIB)	Eglinton–Lawrence	
<b>Coteau, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Don Valley East / Don Valley-Est	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport Minister Responsible for the 2015 Pan and Parapan American Games / Ministre responsable des Jeux panaméricains et parapanaméricains de 2015
Crack, Grant (LIB)	Glengarry–Prescott–Russell	
<b>Damerla, Hon. / L'hon. Dipika (LIB)</b>	Mississauga East–Cooksville / Mississauga-Est–Cooksville	Associate Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Long-Term Care and Wellness) / Ministre associée de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (Soins de longue durée et Promotion du mieux-être) Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Transportation / Ministre des Transports
<b>Del Duca, Hon. / L'hon. Steven (LIB)</b>	Vaughan	
Delaney, Bob (LIB)	Mississauga–Streetsville	
Dhillon, Vic (LIB)	Brampton West / Brampton-Ouest	
Dickson, Joe (LIB)	Ajax–Pickering	
DiNovo, Cheri (NDP)	Parkdale–High Park	
Dong, Han (LIB)	Trinity–Spadina	
<b>Duguid, Hon. / L'hon. Brad (LIB)</b>	Scarborough Centre / Scarborough-Centre	Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure / Ministre du Développement économique, de l'Emploi et de l'Infrastructure
Dunlop, Garfield (PC)	Simcoe North / Simcoe-Nord	
Elliott, Christine (PC)	Whitby–Oshawa	Deputy Leader, Official Opposition / Chef adjointe de l'opposition officielle
Fedeli, Victor (PC)	Nipissing	
Fife, Catherine (NDP)	Kitchener–Waterloo	



Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
<b>Flynn, Hon. / L'hon. Kevin Daniel (LIB)</b>	Oakville	Minister of Labour / Ministre du Travail
Forster, Cindy (NDP)	Welland	
Fraser, John (LIB)	Ottawa South / Ottawa-Sud	
French, Jennifer K. (NDP)	Oshawa	
Gates, Wayne (NDP)	Niagara Falls	
Gélinas, France (NDP)	Nickel Belt	
<b>Gravelle, Hon. / L'hon. Michael (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Superior North / Thunder Bay–Superior-Nord	Minister of Northern Development and Mines / Ministre du Développement du Nord et des Mines
Gretzky, Lisa (NDP)	Windsor West / Windsor-Ouest	
Hardeman, Ernie (PC)	Oxford	
Harris, Michael (PC)	Kitchener–Conestoga	
Hatfield, Percy (NDP)	Windsor–Tecumseh	
Hillier, Randy (PC)	Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington	
Hoggarth, Ann (LIB)	Barrie	
Horwath, Andrea (NDP)	Hamilton Centre / Hamilton-Centre	Leader, Recognized Party / Chef de parti reconnu Leader, New Democratic Party of Ontario / Chef du Nouveau parti démocratique de l'Ontario
<b>Hoskins, Hon. / L'hon. Eric (LIB)</b>	St. Paul's	Minister of Health and Long-Term Care / Ministre de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée
Hudak, Tim (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara- Ouest–Glanbrook	
<b>Hunter, Hon. / L'hon. Mitzie (LIB)</b>	Scarborough–Guildwood	Associate Minister of Finance (Ontario Retirement Pension Plan) / Ministre associée des Finances (Régime de retraite de la province de l'Ontario)
<b>Jaczek, Hon. / L'hon. Helena (LIB)</b>	Oak Ridges–Markham	Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille Minister of Community and Social Services / Ministre des Services sociaux et communautaires
Jones, Sylvia (PC)	Dufferin–Caledon	
Kiwala, Sophie (LIB)	Kingston and the Islands / Kingston et les Îles	
Kwinter, Monte (LIB)	York Centre / York-Centre	
Lalonde, Marie-France (LIB)	Ottawa–Orléans	
<b>Leal, Hon. / L'hon. Jeff (LIB)</b>	Peterborough	Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs / Ministre de l'Agriculture, de l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales
<b>Levac, Hon. / L'hon. Dave (LIB)</b>	Brant	Speaker / Président de l'Assemblée législative
<b>MacCharles, Hon. / L'hon. Tracy (LIB)</b>	Pickering–Scarborough East / Pickering–Scarborough-Est	Minister of Children and Youth Services / Ministre des Services à l'enfance et à la jeunesse Minister Responsible for Women's Issues / Ministre déléguée à la Condition féminine
MacLaren, Jack (PC)	Carleton–Mississippi Mills	
MacLeod, Lisa (PC)	Nepean–Carleton	
Malhi, Harinder (LIB)	Brampton–Springdale	
Mangat, Amrit (LIB)	Mississauga–Brampton South / Mississauga–Brampton-Sud	
Mantha, Michael (NDP)	Algoma–Manitoulin	
Martins, Cristina (LIB)	Davenport	
Martow, Gila (PC)	Thornhill	
<b>Matthews, Hon. / L'hon. Deborah (LIB)</b>	London North Centre / London- Centre-Nord	Deputy Premier / Vice-première ministre Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy / Ministre responsable de la Stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry / Ministre des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts
<b>Mauro, Hon. / L'hon. Bill (LIB)</b>	Thunder Bay–Atikokan	
McDonell, Jim (PC)	Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry	
McGarry, Kathryn (LIB)	Cambridge	
McMahon, Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	
<b>McMeekin, Hon. / L'hon. Ted (LIB)</b>	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough– Westdale	Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing / Ministre des Affaires municipales et du Logement
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
<b>Meilleur, Hon. / L'hon. Madeleine (LIB)</b>	Ottawa–Vanier	Attorney General / Procureure générale Minister Responsible for Francophone Affairs / Ministre déléguée aux Affaires francophones

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
<b>Miller, Paul (NDP)</b>	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)</b>	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research and Innovation / Ministre de la Recherche et de l'Innovation
		Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities / Ministre de la Formation et des Collèges et Universités
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	Deputy Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire adjointe de l'opposition officielle
<b>Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)</b>	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Indira (LIB)	Halton	
<b>Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)</b>	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services / Ministre de la Sécurité communautaire et des Services correctionnels
		Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	
<b>Nicholls, Rick (PC)</b>	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Second Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Deuxième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
<b>Orazietti, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Sault Ste. Marie	Minister of Government and Consumer Services / Ministre des Services gouvernementaux et des Services aux consommateurs
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
<b>Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)</b>	Guelph	Minister of Education / Ministre de l'Éducation
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
<b>Sergio, Hon. / L'hon. Mario (LIB)</b>	York West / York-Ouest	Minister Responsible for Seniors Affairs Minister Without Portfolio / Ministre sans portefeuille
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint du gouvernement
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
<b>Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)</b>	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Leader, Official Opposition / Chef de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	
<b>Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)</b>	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
		Premier / Première ministre
		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
<b>Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)</b>	Willowdale	Minister of Aboriginal Affairs / Ministre des Affaires autochtones



**STANDING AND SELECT COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
COMITÉS PERMANENTS ET SPÉCIAUX DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

**Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses**

Chair / Président: Vacant  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Monique Taylor  
Bas Balkissoon, Chris Ballard  
Grant Crack, Cheri DiNovo  
Han Dong, Michael Harris  
Randy Hillier, Sophie Kiwala  
Monique Taylor  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs /  
Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques**

Chair / Présidente: Soo Wong  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Peter Z. Milczyn  
Laura Albanese, Yvan Baker  
Victor Fedeli, Catherine Fife  
Ann Hoggarth, Monte McNaughton  
Peter Z. Milczyn, Daiene Vernile  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch

**Standing Committee on General Government / Comité  
permanent des affaires gouvernementales**

Chair / Président: Grant Crack  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Joe Dickson  
Mike Colle, Grant Crack  
Joe Dickson, Lisa Gretzky  
Ann Hoggarth, Sophie Kiwala  
Eleanor McMahon, Lisa M. Thompson  
Jeff Yurek  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Government Agencies / Comité  
permanent des organismes gouvernementaux**

Chair / Président: John Fraser  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Cristina Martins  
Vic Dhillon, John Fraser  
Wayne Gates, Marie-France Lalonde  
Harinder Malhi, Cristina Martins  
Jim McDonell, Randy Pettapiece  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przedziecki

**Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de  
la justice**

Chair / Président: Shafiq Qaadri  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Lorenzo Berardinetti, Bob Delaney  
Jack MacLaren, Michael Mantha  
Cristina Martins, Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri  
Todd Smith  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Tamara Pomanski

**Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité  
permanent de l'Assemblée législative**

Chair / Président: Toby Barrett  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Garfield Dunlop  
Granville Anderson, Bas Balkissoon  
Chris Ballard, Toby Barrett  
Garfield Dunlop, Michael Mantha  
Eleanor McMahon, Laurie Scott  
Soo Wong  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Trevor Day

**Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent  
des comptes publics**

Chair / Président: Ernie Hardeman  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod  
Han Dong, John Fraser  
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield  
Lisa MacLeod, Harinder Malhi  
Julia Munro, Arthur Potts  
Lou Rinaldi  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

**Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité  
permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé**

Chair / Présidente: Indira Naidoo-Harris  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Kathryn McGarry  
Robert Bailey, Lorenzo Berardinetti  
Jennifer K. French, Monte Kwinter  
Amrit Mangat, Kathryn McGarry  
Indira Naidoo-Harris, Daiene Vernile  
Bill Walker  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de  
la politique sociale**

Chair / Président: Peter Tabuns  
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Jagmeet Singh  
Granville Anderson, Vic Dhillon  
Christine Elliott, Marie-France Lalonde  
Amrit Mangat, Gila Martow  
Kathryn McGarry, Jagmeet Singh  
Peter Tabuns  
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Valerie Quioc Lim

**Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment /  
Comité spécial de la violence et du harcèlement à caractère  
sexuel**

Chair / Présidente: Daiene Vernile  
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott  
Han Dong, Randy Hillier  
Marie-France Lalonde, Harinder Malhi  
Kathryn McGarry, Eleanor McMahon  
Taras Natyshak, Peggy Sattler  
Laurie Scott, Daiene Vernile  
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short











## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS / DÉPÔT DES PROJETS DE LOI

### DEFERRED VOTES / VOTES DIFFÉRÉS

<b>Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Act, 2015, Bill 80, Mr. Naqvi / Loi de 2015 modifiant la Loi sur la Société de protection des animaux de l'Ontario, projet de loi 80, M. Naqvi</b>	
Third reading agreed to .....	4726
<b>Ontario Immigration Act, 2015, Bill 49, Mr. Chan / Loi de 2015 sur l'immigration en Ontario, projet de loi 49, M. Chan</b>	
Third reading agreed to .....	4727

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Mike Colle.....	4727
---------------------	------

### MEMBERS' STATEMENTS / DÉCLARATIONS DES DÉPUTÉS

<b>Pesticides</b>	
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4727
<b>School dress codes</b>	
Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4727
<b>Kitchener Public Library</b>	
Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4727
<b>Community colleges</b>	
Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4728
<b>High school students</b>	
Mme France Gélinas .....	4728
<b>Rich Griffin</b>	
Mr. Glenn Thibeault.....	4728
<b>Hydro One</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott.....	4728
<b>Asian and South Asian Heritage Month</b>	
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4729
<b>Angelman syndrome</b>	
Mr. Mike Colle.....	4729
<b>Visitors</b>	
Mr. Arthur Potts .....	4729

### REPORTS BY COMMITTEES / RAPPORTS DES COMITÉS

<b>Standing Committee on Public Accounts</b>	
Mr. Ernie Hardeman .....	4729
Debate adjourned .....	4730

<b>Listening to Ontarians Act (Hydro One and Other Electricity Assets), 2015, Bill 107, Ms. Horwath / Loi de 2015 sur la nécessité d'être à l'écoute des Ontariens (Hydro One et autres éléments d'actifs liés à l'électricité), projet de loi 107, Mme Horwath</b>	
First reading agreed to .....	4730
Mme Andrea Horwath.....	4730
<b>Angelman Syndrome Day Act, 2015, Bill 108, Mr. Colle / Loi de 2015 sur le Jour du syndrome d'Angelman, projet de loi 108, M. Colle</b>	
First reading agreed to .....	4730
Mr. Mike Colle.....	4730
<b>Employment and Labour Statute Law Amendment Act, 2015, Bill 109, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne l'emploi et les relations de travail, projet de loi 109, M. Flynn</b>	
First reading agreed to .....	4730
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4730

### MOTIONS

<b>Appointment of Ombudsman</b>	
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4731
Motion agreed to .....	4731
<b>Appointment of temporary Environmental Commissioner</b>	
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4731
Motion agreed to .....	4731
<b>Order of business</b>	
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4731
Motion agreed to .....	4732
<b>Order of business</b>	
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4732
Motion agreed to .....	4732

### PETITIONS / PÉTITIONS

<b>Pesticides</b>	
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4732
<b>Hospital funding</b>	
Ms. Cindy Forster.....	4732
<b>Legal aid</b>	
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4733
<b>Taxation</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4733
<b>Lyme disease</b>	
Mr. Michael Mantha.....	4733
<b>Legal aid</b>	
Ms. Harinder Malhi.....	4733

<b>Ontario Retirement Pension Plan</b>	
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4734
<b>Privatization of public assets</b>	
Mr. Percy Hatfield .....	4734
<b>Credit unions</b>	
Mr. John Fraser .....	4734
<b>Alcohol sales</b>	
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4734
<b>Prix de l'essence</b>	
Mme France Gélinas .....	4735
<b>Credit unions</b>	
Ms. Harinder Malhi .....	4735
<b>Pesticides</b>	
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4735

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS /  
AFFAIRES D'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC  
ÉMANANT DES DÉPUTÉS**

<b>Financial literacy</b>	
Mr. Vic Dhillon .....	4735
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4737
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4738
Ms. Harinder Malhi .....	4739
Ms. Lisa M. Thompson .....	4740
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4741
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4741
Mrs. Julia Munro .....	4742
Mr. Vic Dhillon .....	4743
<b>Empowering Home Care Patients Act, 2015, Bill 92, Mrs. Gretzky / Loi de 2015 donnant plus de pouvoir aux personnes recevant des soins à domicile, projet de loi 92, Mme Gretzky</b>	
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4743
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4745
Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4746
Ms. Cindy Forster .....	4747
Hon. James J. Bradley .....	4748
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4749
Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong .....	4749
Mr. John Fraser .....	4750
Mme France Gélinas .....	4750
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4751
<b>Multiculturalism</b>	
Mr. Han Dong .....	4751
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4752

Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4754
Ms. Indira Naidoo-Harris .....	4755
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4756
Mr. Shafiq Qadri .....	4756
Mr. Jagmeet Singh .....	4757
Mr. Han Dong .....	4758
<b>Financial literacy</b>	
Motion agreed to .....	4758
<b>Empowering Home Care Patients Act, 2015, Bill 92, Mrs. Gretzky / Loi de 2015 donnant plus de pouvoir aux personnes recevant des soins à domicile, projet de loi 92, Mme Gretzky</b>	
Second reading agreed to .....	4758
<b>Multiculturalism</b>	
Motion agreed to .....	4758
<b>Visitors</b>	
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4758

**ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR**

<b>Protecting the School Year Act, 2015, Bill 103, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 sur la protection de l'année scolaire, projet de loi 103, M. Flynn</b>	
Second reading agreed to .....	4759
<b>Protecting the School Year Act, 2015, Bill 103, Mr. Flynn / Loi de 2015 sur la protection de l'année scolaire, projet de loi 103, M. Flynn</b>	
Third reading agreed to .....	4760
<b>Transportation Statute Law Amendment Act (Making Ontario's Roads Safer), 2015, Bill 31, Mr. Del Duca / Loi de 2015 modifiant des lois en ce qui concerne le transport (accroître la sécurité routière en Ontario), projet de loi 31, M. Del Duca</b>	
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4760
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4762
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4762
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4762
Mrs. Gila Martow .....	4763
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4763
Mr. Wayne Gates .....	4763
Third reading debate deemed adjourned .....	4769
<b>Royal assent / Sanction royale</b>	
The Deputy Clerk (Mr. Todd Decker) .....	4769



## CONTENTS / TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Thursday 28 May 2015 / Jeudi 28 mai 2015

### ORDERS OF THE DAY / ORDRE DU JOUR

Mr. Steve Clark .....	4703
Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4705
Mr. Gilles Bisson .....	4709
Debate deemed adjourned .....	4714

### INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS / PRÉSENTATION DES VISITEURS

Mr. Norm Miller .....	4714
Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4714
Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4714
Ms. Cheri DiNovo .....	4714
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry .....	4714
Mr. Taras Natyshak .....	4714
Mr. Chris Ballard .....	4714
Ms. Jennifer K. French .....	4714
Mr. Yvan Baker .....	4714
Mr. Randy Pettapiece .....	4714
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4714
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde .....	4714
Mr. Paul Miller .....	4714
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4714
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4715
Mme France Gélinas .....	4715
Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn .....	4715
Hon. Glen R. Murray .....	4715
Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4715
Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4715

### ORAL QUESTIONS / QUESTIONS ORALES

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Jim Wilson .....	4715
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4715
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4715

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mr. Garfield Dunlop .....	4716
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4716

#### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4717
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4717

#### Privatization of public assets

Ms. Andrea Horwath .....	4717
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4718
Hon. Charles Sousa .....	4718

#### Hydro One

Mr. John Yakabuski .....	4719
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4719

#### Privatization of public assets

Mr. Peter Tabuns .....	4719
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4719
Hon. Bob Chiarelli .....	4719

#### Community services

Mr. Granville Anderson .....	4720
Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4720

#### Human trafficking

Ms. Laurie Scott .....	4720
Hon. Tracy MacCharles .....	4721

#### Teachers' labour disputes

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky .....	4721
Hon. Kathleen O. Wynne .....	4721
Hon. Liz Sandals .....	4721

#### Off-road vehicles

Mr. Grant Crack .....	4722
Hon. Steven Del Duca .....	4722

#### Vaccinations

Ms. Sylvia Jones .....	4722
Hon. Eric Hoskins .....	4722

#### Pan Am Games

Mr. Paul Miller .....	4723
Hon. Michael Coteau .....	4723

#### Condominium legislation

Ms. Daiene Vernile .....	4724
Hon. David Oraziotti .....	4724

#### Employment supports

Mr. Bill Walker .....	4724
Hon. Helena Jaczek .....	4724

#### Employment supports

Ms. Peggy Sattler .....	4725
Hon. Reza Moridi .....	4725

#### Visitors

Mr. Lou Rinaldi .....	4725
Mrs. Cristina Martins .....	4725
Mr. Bob Delaney .....	4725

*Continued on inside back cover*











